



EUROPEAN CLIMATE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT EXECUTIVE AGENCY (CINEA)

CINEA.D – Natural resources, climate, sustainable blue economy and clean energy
D.2 – LIFE Environment (Nature & Circular Economy)

GRANT AGREEMENT

Project 101148675 — LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA

PREAMBLE

This **Agreement** ('the Agreement') is **between** the following parties:

on the one part,

the **European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and

on the other part,

1. 'the coordinator':

LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTIKHS ANONIMH ETERIA (LEVER), PIC 928581583, established in 26TH OCTOVRIOU 43, THESSALONIKI 546 27, Greece,

and the following other beneficiaries, if they sign their 'accession form' (see Annex 3 and Article 40):

2. **INTREPRINDerea DE STAT INSTITUTUL DE CERCETARI SI AMENAJARI SILVICE (ICAS)**, PIC 932605822, established in CALEA IESILOR 69, CHISINAU 2069, Moldova,

3. **MOUSEIO GOULANDRI FYSIKIS ISTORIAS (EKBY)**, PIC 988990079, established in LEVIDOU 13, ATHINA 14562, Greece,

4. **KARTERIS APOSTOLOS KARTERIS MARIN OE (kartECO)**, PIC 962334479, established in AGIAS ANASTASIAS AND LAERTOU, THESSALONIKI 57001, Greece,

5. **ASOCIAȚIA OBSTEASCA ECOCONTACT (EcoContact)**, PIC 923380249, established in 18/2 CUZA VODA STR, CHISINAU 2060, Moldova,

Unless otherwise specified, references to 'beneficiary' or 'beneficiaries' include the coordinator and affiliated entities (if any).

If only one beneficiary signs the grant agreement ('mono-beneficiary grant'), all provisions referring to the 'coordinator' or the 'beneficiaries' will be considered — mutatis mutandis — as referring to the beneficiary.

The parties referred to above have agreed to enter into the Agreement.



By signing the Agreement and the accession forms, the beneficiaries accept the grant and agree to implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

The Agreement is composed of:

Preamble

Terms and Conditions (including Data Sheet)

Annex 1 Description of the action¹

Annex 2 Estimated budget for the action

Annex 2a Additional information on unit costs and contributions (if applicable)

Annex 3 Accession forms (if applicable)²

Annex 3a Declaration on joint and several liability of affiliated entities (if applicable)³

Annex 4 Model for the financial statements

Annex 5 Specific rules (if applicable)

¹ Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

² Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

³ Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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DATA SHEET

1. General data

Project summary:

Project summary
LIFE RENATA aims at supporting the Republic of Moldova in advancing the establishment and management of the Emerald Network of protected sites and to move closer to the EU standards for the conservation of species and habitats, by providing support in the following horizontal fundamental areas: Legal a) Assessment on the legal and Institutional framework, and its distance to correspondence to the EU Nature Directives implementation. b) Regulatory recommendations and a Roadmap up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald network to Natura 2000 Technical c) Reviewing, assessing and proposing MD Emerald sites in order to approach the EU Nature Directives standards and reply to the insufficiency results during the last biogeographical seminars, providing knowledge on the habitats and species listed in the Birds and Habitats Directives. d) Knowledge repository Hub including a "Living" library and a "pool" of National/European experts setting the basis for enhancing efforts of cooperation with the EU. Operational e) Improve local capacities on criteria-based assessments, appropriate site management, monitoring and reporting requirements with the development of a ready to use set of technical guidelines, action plans, monitoring and reporting tools. f) Feasibility tool for Emerald to Natura 2000 transformation, based on two pilot examples (a strong & a weak case in terms of conservation level). The feasibility study together with the proposed Roadmap and the project technical outputs will comprise a decision and technical framework for future steps. LIFE-RENATA is expected to improve the competence of relevant stakeholders and authorities by providing: 1 In depth understanding of EU Habitat Directives, 2 Ready to use methods, tools and materials for monitoring and reporting 3 A Knowledge Repository Hub and a GIS database and 4 Improved knowledge and a profound understanding of the Natura 2000 species and habitats' protection in the existing Emerald sites.

Keywords: not defined

Project number: 101148675

Project name: Roadmap for the alignment of EMERALD network establishment and management to NATURA 2000 standards in Moldova

Project acronym: LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA

Call: LIFE-2023-PLP

Topic: LIFE-2023-PLP-NAT-ENV

Type of action: LIFE Project Grants

Granting authority: European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency

Grant managed through EU Funding & Tenders Portal: Yes (eGrants)

Project starting date: first day of the month following the entry into force date

Project end date: starting date + months of duration

Project duration: 24 months

Consortium agreement: Yes

2. Participants

List of participants:

Nº	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Max grant amount
1	COO	LEVER	LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTIKHS ANONIMH ETERIA	EL	928581583	200 197.00	180 177.30
2	BEN	ICAS	INTREPRINDerea de stat INSTITUTUL DE CERCETARI SI AMENAJARI SILVICE	MD	932605822	278 307.00	250 476.30
3	BEN	EKBY	MOUSEIO GOULANDRI FYSIKIS ISTORIAS	EL	988990079	225 363.40	202 827.06
4	BEN	kartECO	KARTERIS APOSTOLOS KARTERIS MARIN OE	EL	962334479	196 451.49	176 806.34



Nº	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Max grant amount
5	BEN	EcoContact	ASOCIATIA OBSTEASCA ECOCONTACT	MD	923380249	89 345.00	80 410.50
6	AP	MoE-MD	Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova	MD	881285741	0.00	0.00
Total						989 663.89	890 697.50

Coordinator:

- LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTXHS ANONIMH ETERIA (LEVER)

3. Grant**Maximum grant amount, total estimated eligible costs and contributions and funding rate:**

Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Funding rate (%)	Maximum grant amount (Annex 2)	Maximum grant amount (award decision)
989 663.89	90	890 697.50	890 697.50

Grant form: Budget-based**Grant mode:** Action grant**Budget categories/activity types:**

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
 - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
 - A.5 Volunteers
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories
 - D.1 Financial support to third parties
 - D.2 Land purchase
- E. Indirect costs

Cost eligibility options:

- Standard supplementary payments
- Limitation for subcontracting
- Travel and subsistence:
 - Travel: Actual costs
 - Accommodation: Actual costs
 - Subsistence: Actual costs
- Equipment: depreciation only
- Costs for providing financial support to third parties (actual cost; max amount for each recipient: EUR 0.00)



- Indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: Yes
- Other ineligible costs

Budget flexibility: Yes (no flexibility cap)

4. Reporting, payments and recoveries

4.1 Continuous reporting (art 21)

Deliverables: see Funding & Tenders Portal Continuous Reporting tool

4.2 Periodic reporting and payments

Reporting and payment schedule (art 21, 22):

Reporting					Payments	
Reporting periods			Type	Deadline	Type	Deadline (time to pay)
RP No	Month from	Month to				
					Initial prefinancing	30 days from entry into force/financial guarantee (if required) – whichever is the latest
1	1	12	Additional prefinancing report	60 days after end of reporting period	Additional prefinancing	60 days from receiving additional prefinancing report/financial guarantee (if required) – whichever is the latest
2	13	24	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period	Final payment	90 days from receiving periodic report

Prefinancing payments and guarantees:

Prefinancing payment		Prefinancing guarantee		
Type	Amount	Guarantee amount	Division per participant	
Prefinancing 1 (initial)	267 209.25	n/a	1 - LEVER	n/a
			2 - ICAS	n/a
			3 - EKBY	n/a
			4 - kartECO	n/a
			5 - EcoContact	n/a
Prefinancing 2 (additional)	445 348.75	n/a	1 - LEVER	n/a
			2 - ICAS	n/a
			3 - EKBY	n/a
			4 - kartECO	n/a
			5 - EcoContact	n/a

Reporting and payment modalities (art 21, 22):

Mutual Insurance Mechanism (MIM): No

Restrictions on distribution of initial prefinancing: The prefinancing may be distributed only if the minimum number of beneficiaries set out in the call conditions (if any) have acceded to the Agreement and only to beneficiaries that have acceded.

Interim payment ceiling (if any): 90% of the maximum grant amount

No-profit rule: Yes

Late payment interest: ECB + 3.5%

Bank account for payments:

GR9201722150005215072125597 PIRBGRAA

Conversion into euros: Double conversion

Reporting language: Language of the Agreement

4.3 Certificates (art 24):

Certificates on the financial statements (CFS):

Conditions:

Schedule: interim/final payment, if threshold is reached

Standard threshold (beneficiary-level):

- financial statement: requested EU contribution to costs \geq EUR 500 000.00

4.4 Recoveries (art 22)**First-line liability for recoveries:**

Beneficiary termination: Beneficiary concerned

Final payment: Coordinator

After final payment: Beneficiary concerned

Joint and several liability for enforced recoveries (in case of non-payment):

Limited joint and several liability of other beneficiaries — up to the maximum grant amount of the beneficiary

Joint and several liability of affiliated entities — n/a

5. Consequences of non-compliance, applicable law & dispute settlement forum**Applicable law** (art 43):

Standard applicable law regime: EU law + law of Belgium

Dispute settlement forum (art 43):

Standard dispute settlement forum:



EU beneficiaries: EU General Court + EU Court of Justice (on appeal)

Non-EU beneficiaries: Courts of Brussels, Belgium (unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements)

6. Other

Specific rules (Annex 5): Yes

Standard time-limits after project end:

Confidentiality (for X years after final payment): 5

Record-keeping (for X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Reviews (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Audits (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Extension of findings from other grants to this grant (no later than X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Impact evaluation (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)



CHAPTER 1 GENERAL

ARTICLE 1 — SUBJECT OF THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement sets out the rights and obligations and terms and conditions applicable to the grant awarded for the implementation of the action set out in Chapter 2.

ARTICLE 2 — DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Agreement, the following definitions apply:

Actions — The project which is being funded in the context of this Agreement.

Grant — The grant awarded in the context of this Agreement.

EU grants — Grants awarded by EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies (including EU executive agencies, EU regulatory agencies, EDA, joint undertakings, etc.).

Participants — Entities participating in the action as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties.

Beneficiaries (BEN) — The signatories of this Agreement (either directly or through an accession form).

Affiliated entities (AE) — Entities affiliated to a beneficiary within the meaning of Article 187 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046⁴ which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries (obligation to implement action tasks and right to charge costs and claim contributions).

Associated partners (AP) — Entities which participate in the action, but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions.

Purchases — Contracts for goods, works or services needed to carry out the action (e.g. equipment, consumables and supplies) but which are not part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

Subcontracting — Contracts for goods, works or services that are part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

In-kind contributions — In-kind contributions within the meaning of Article 2(36) of EU Financial

⁴ For the definition, see Article 187 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1): "**affiliated entities** [are]:

- (a) entities that form a sole beneficiary [i.e. where an entity is formed of several entities that satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant, including where the entity is specifically established for the purpose of implementing an action to be financed by a grant];
- (b) entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Article 136(1) and 141(1) and that have a link with the beneficiary, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation".

Regulation 2018/1046, i.e. non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties.

Fraud — Fraud within the meaning of Article 3 of EU Directive 2017/1371⁵ and Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995⁶, as well as any other wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.

Irregularities — Any type of breach (regulatory or contractual) which could impact the EU financial interests, including irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation 2988/95⁷.

Grave professional misconduct — Any type of unacceptable or improper behaviour in exercising one's profession, especially by employees, including grave professional misconduct within the meaning of Article 136(1)(c) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

Applicable EU, international and national law — Any legal acts or other (binding or non-binding) rules and guidance in the area concerned.

Portal — EU Funding & Tenders Portal; electronic portal and exchange system managed by the European Commission and used by itself and other EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies for the management of their funding programmes (grants, procurements, prizes, etc.).

CHAPTER 2 ACTION

ARTICLE 3 — ACTION

The grant is awarded for the action **101148675 — LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA** ('action'), as described in Annex 1.

ARTICLE 4 — DURATION AND STARTING DATE

The duration and the starting date of the action are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 1).

CHAPTER 3 GRANT

ARTICLE 5 — GRANT

5.1 Form of grant

⁵ Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29).

⁶ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

⁷ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

The grant is an action grant⁸ which takes the form of a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (i.e. a grant based on actual costs incurred, but which may also include other forms of funding, such as unit costs or contributions, flat-rate costs or contributions, lump sum costs or contributions or financing not linked to costs).

5.2 Maximum grant amount

The maximum grant amount is set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 3) and in the estimated budget (Annex 2).

5.3 Funding rate

The funding rate for costs is 90% of the action's eligible costs.

Contributions are not subject to any funding rate.

5.4 Estimated budget, budget categories and forms of funding

The estimated budget for the action is set out in Annex 2.

It contains the estimated eligible costs and contributions for the action, broken down by participant and budget category.

Annex 2 also shows the types of costs and contributions (forms of funding)⁹ to be used for each budget category.

If unit costs or contributions are used, the details on the calculation will be explained in Annex 2a.

5.5 Budget flexibility

The budget breakdown may be adjusted — without an amendment (see Article 39) — by transfers (between participants and budget categories), as long as this does not imply any substantive or important change to the description of the action in Annex 1.

However:

- changes to the budget category for volunteers (if used) always require an amendment
- changes to budget categories with lump sums costs or contributions (if used; including financing not linked to costs) always require an amendment
- changes to budget categories with higher funding rates or budget ceilings (if used) always require an amendment
- addition of amounts for subcontracts not provided for in Annex 1 either require an amendment or simplified approval in accordance with Article 6.2

⁸ For the definition, see Article 180(2)(a) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: ‘**action grant**’ means an EU grant to finance “an action intended to help achieve a Union policy objective”.

⁹ See Article 125 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

- other changes require an amendment or simplified approval, if specifically provided for in Article 6.2
- flexibility caps: not applicable.

ARTICLE 6 — ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In order to be eligible, costs and contributions must meet the **eligibility** conditions set out in this Article.

6.1 General eligibility conditions

The **general eligibility conditions** are the following:

- (a) for actual costs:
 - (i) they must be actually incurred by the beneficiary
 - (ii) they must be incurred in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of costs relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be incurred afterwards; see Article 21)
 - (iii) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2
 - (iv) they must be incurred in connection with the action as described in Annex 1 and necessary for its implementation
 - (v) they must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in the country where the beneficiary is established and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices
 - (vi) they must comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security and
 - (vii) they must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency
- (b) for unit costs or contributions (if any):
 - (i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2
 - (ii) the units must:
 - be actually used or produced by the beneficiary in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of units relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be used or produced afterwards; see Article 21)
 - be necessary for the implementation of the action and
 - (iii) the number of units must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular supported by records and documentation (see Article 20)

(c) for flat-rate costs or contributions (if any):

- (i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2
- (ii) the costs or contributions to which the flat-rate is applied must:
 - be eligible
 - relate to the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of costs or contributions relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be incurred afterwards; see Article 21)

(d) for lump sum costs or contributions (if any):

- (i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2
- (ii) the work must be properly implemented by the beneficiary in accordance with Annex 1
- (iii) the deliverables/outputs must be achieved in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of deliverables/outputs relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be achieved afterwards; see Article 21)

(e) for unit, flat-rate or lump sum costs or contributions according to usual cost accounting practices (if any):

- (i) they must fulfil the general eligibility conditions for the type of cost concerned
- (ii) the cost accounting practices must be applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding

(f) for financing not linked to costs (if any): the results must be achieved or the conditions must be fulfilled as described in Annex 1.

In addition, for direct cost categories (e.g. personnel, travel & subsistence, subcontracting and other direct costs) only costs that are directly linked to the action implementation and can therefore be attributed to it directly are eligible. They must not include any indirect costs (i.e. costs that are only indirectly linked to the action, e.g. via cost drivers).

6.2 Specific eligibility conditions for each budget category

For each budget category, the **specific eligibility conditions** are as follows:

Direct costs

A. Personnel costs

A.1 Costs for employees (or equivalent) are eligible as personnel costs if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action.

They must be limited to salaries, social security contributions, taxes and other costs linked to the

remuneration, if they arise from national law or the employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred, in accordance with the following method:

{daily rate for the person
multiplied by
number of day-equivalents worked on the action (rounded up or down to the nearest half-day)}.

The daily rate must be calculated as:

{annual personnel costs for the person
divided by
215}.

The number of day-equivalents declared for a person must be identifiable and verifiable (see Article 20).

The total number of day-equivalents declared in EU grants, for a person for a year, cannot be higher than 215.

The personnel costs may also include supplementary payments for personnel assigned to the action (including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature), if:

- it is part of the beneficiary's usual remuneration practices and is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required
- the criteria used to calculate the supplementary payments are objective and generally applied by the beneficiary, regardless of the source of funding used.

A.2 and A.3 Costs for natural persons working under a direct contract other than an employment contract and costs for **seconded persons by a third party against payment** are also eligible as personnel costs, if they are assigned to the action, fulfil the general eligibility conditions and:

- (a) work under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed) and
- (b) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary (unless agreed otherwise).

They must be calculated on the basis of a rate which corresponds to the costs actually incurred for the direct contract or secondment and must not be significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

A.4 The work of **SME owners** for the action (i.e. owners of beneficiaries that are small and medium-sized enterprises¹⁰ not receiving a salary) or **natural person beneficiaries** (i.e. beneficiaries that are

¹⁰ For the definition, see Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC: micro, small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) are enterprises

- engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of their legal form (including, in particular, self-employed persons and family businesses engaged in craft or other activities, and partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity) and

natural persons not receiving a salary) may be declared as personnel costs, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are calculated as unit costs in accordance with the method set out in Annex 2a.

A.5 The work of volunteers for the action (i.e. persons who freely work for an organisation, on a non-compulsory basis and without being paid) may be declared as personnel costs, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are calculated as unit costs in accordance with the method set out in Annex 2a.

They:

- may not exceed the maximum amount for volunteers for the action (which corresponds to 50% of the total (ineligible and eligible) project costs and contributions estimated in the proposal)
- may not exceed the maximum amount for volunteers for each beneficiary set out in Annex 2
- may not make the maximum EU contribution to costs higher than the total eligible costs without volunteers.

If also indirect costs for volunteers are declared eligible in the call conditions, the amount of indirect costs may be added to the volunteers costs category in Annex 2, at the flat-rate set out in Point E.

B. Subcontracting costs

Subcontracting costs for the action (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible or non-refundable value added tax (VAT)) are eligible, if they are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred, fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are awarded using the beneficiary's usual purchasing practices — provided these ensure subcontracts with best value for money (or if appropriate the lowest price) and that there is no conflict of interests (see Article 12).

Beneficiaries that are 'contracting authorities/entities' within the meaning of the EU Directives on public procurement must also comply with the applicable national law on public procurement.

Subcontracting may cover only a limited part of the action.

The tasks to be subcontracted and the estimated cost for each subcontract must be set out in Annex 1 and the total estimated costs of subcontracting per beneficiary must be set out in Annex 2 (or may be approved ex post in the periodic report, if the use of subcontracting does not entail changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants; 'simplified approval procedure').

C. Purchase costs

Purchase costs for the action (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible or non-refundable value added tax (VAT)) are eligible if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are bought using the beneficiary's usual purchasing practices — provided these ensure purchases with

- employing fewer than 250 persons (expressed in 'annual working units' as defined in Article 5 of the Recommendation) and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.

best value for money (or if appropriate the lowest price) and that there is no conflict of interests (see Article 12).

Beneficiaries that are ‘contracting authorities/entities’ within the meaning of the EU Directives on public procurement must also comply with the applicable national law on public procurement.

C.1 Travel and subsistence

Purchases for **travel, accommodation and subsistence** must be calculated as follows:

- travel: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary’s usual practices on travel
- accommodation: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary’s usual practices on travel
- subsistence: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary’s usual practices on travel .

C.2 Equipment

Purchases of **equipment, infrastructure or other assets** used for the action must be declared as depreciation costs, calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary’s usual accounting practices.

Only the portion of the costs that corresponds to the rate of actual use for the action during the action duration can be taken into account.

Costs for **renting or leasing** equipment, infrastructure or other assets are also eligible, if they do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment, infrastructure or assets and do not include any financing fees.

C.3 Other goods, works and services

Purchases of **other goods, works and services** must be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred.

Such goods, works and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, promotion, dissemination, protection of results, translations, publications, certificates and financial guarantees, if required under the Agreement.

D. Other cost categories

D.1 Financial support to third parties

Costs for providing financial support to third parties (in the form of **grants, prizes** or similar forms of support; if any) are eligible, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions, are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and the support is implemented in accordance with the conditions set out in Annex 1.

These conditions must ensure objective and transparent selection procedures and include at least the following:

(a) for grants (or similar):

- (i) the maximum amount of financial support for each third party ('recipient'); this amount may not exceed the amount set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 3) or otherwise agreed with the granting authority
- (ii) the criteria for calculating the exact amount of the financial support
- (iii) the different types of activity that qualify for financial support, on the basis of a closed list
- (iv) the persons or categories of persons that will be supported and
- (v) the criteria and procedures for giving financial support

(b) for prizes (or similar):

- (i) the eligibility and award criteria
- (ii) the amount of the prize and
- (iii) the payment arrangements.

D.2 Land purchase

Costs for land purchase from private entities (or long-term lease of land or one-off compensations for land use rights) are eligible, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions, are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and:

- (a) the purchase will contribute to improving, maintaining and restoring the integrity of the Natura 2000 network set up pursuant to Article 3 of Directive 92/43/EEC, including through improving connectivity by the creation of corridors, stepping stones, or other elements of green infrastructure
- (b) land purchase is the only or most cost-effective way of achieving the desired conservation outcome
- (c) the land purchased is reserved in the long term for uses consistent with the specific objectives of the LIFE Programme
- (d) the Member State concerned ensures, by way of transfer or otherwise, the long-term assignment of such land to nature conservation purposes and the beneficiary documents this by ensuring that:
 - (i) the entry into the land register includes a condition that the land will be assigned definitively to nature conservation
 - (ii) or, if there is no land register or such a condition is not possible under national law, that such a condition is either included in the land sale contract or guaranteed by equivalent means
- (e) for land purchases by private entity beneficiaries: the beneficiaries ensure the long-term conservation by ensuring that:

- (i) the entry into the land register includes a condition that, in case of their dissolution or incapacity to manage the land according to nature conservation requirements, the property will be transferred to an entity primarily active in the field of nature protection
- (ii) or, if there is no land register or such a condition is not possible under national law, that such a condition is either included in the land sale contract or guaranteed by equivalent means
- (f) for purchases of partial rights: the entry into the land register duly reflects the long-term nature conservation objectives and the requirements set out in this Article
- (g) for land purchased to be exchanged at a later date for another parcel on which the action will be undertaken: the exchange is carried out before the end of the action and the land exchanged complies with the requirements set out in this Article
- (h) for long-term leases: the lease is of at least 20 years and includes provisions and commitments that ensure the achievement of its objectives in terms of habitat and species protection.

This cost will not be taken into account for the indirect cost flat-rate.

Indirect costs

E. Indirect costs

Indirect costs will be reimbursed at the flat-rate of 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any).

Contributions

Not applicable

6.3 Ineligible costs and contributions

The following costs or contributions are **ineligible**:

- (a) costs or contributions that do not comply with the conditions set out above (Article 6.1 and 6.2), in particular:
 - (i) costs related to return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary
 - (ii) debt and debt service charges
 - (iii) provisions for future losses or debts
 - (iv) interest owed
 - (v) currency exchange losses
 - (vi) bank costs charged by the beneficiary's bank for transfers from the granting authority
 - (vii) excessive or reckless expenditure

- (viii) deductible or refundable VAT (including VAT paid by public bodies acting as public authority)
- (ix) costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant agreement suspension (see Article 31)
- (x) in-kind contributions by third parties

(b) costs or contributions declared under other EU grants (or grants awarded by an EU Member State, non-EU country or other body implementing the EU budget), except for the following cases:

- (i) Synergy actions: not applicable
- (ii) if the action grant is combined with an operating grant¹¹ running during the same period and the beneficiary can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any (direct or indirect) costs of the action grant

(c) costs or contributions for staff of a national (or regional/local) administration, for activities that are part of the administration's normal activities (i.e. not undertaken only because of the grant)

(d) costs or contributions (especially travel and subsistence) for staff or representatives of EU institutions, bodies or agencies

(e) other :

- (i) country restrictions for eligible costs: not applicable
- (ii) costs or contributions declared specifically ineligible in the call conditions.

6.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary declares costs or contributions that are ineligible, they will be rejected (see Article 27).

This may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 1 CONSORTIUM: BENEFICIARIES, AFFILIATED ENTITIES AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS

ARTICLE 7 — BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries, as signatories of the Agreement, are fully responsible towards the granting authority for implementing it and for complying with all its obligations.

¹¹ For the definition, see Article 180(2)(b) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: 'operating grant' means an EU grant to finance "the functioning of a body which has an objective forming part of and supporting an EU policy".

They must implement the Agreement to their best abilities, in good faith and in accordance with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

They must have the appropriate resources to implement the action and implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with Article 11. If they rely on affiliated entities or other participants (see Articles 8 and 9), they retain sole responsibility towards the granting authority and the other beneficiaries.

They are jointly responsible for the *technical* implementation of the action. If one of the beneficiaries fails to implement their part of the action, the other beneficiaries must ensure that this part is implemented by someone else (without being entitled to an increase of the maximum grant amount and subject to an amendment; see Article 39). The *financial* responsibility of each beneficiary in case of recoveries is governed by Article 22.

The beneficiaries (and their action) must remain eligible under the EU programme funding the grant for the entire duration of the action. Costs and contributions will be eligible only as long as the beneficiary and the action are eligible.

The **internal roles and responsibilities** of the beneficiaries are divided as follows:

(a) Each beneficiary must:

- (i) keep information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date (see Article 19)
- (ii) inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) immediately of any events or circumstances likely to affect significantly or delay the implementation of the action (see Article 19)
- (iii) submit to the coordinator in good time:
 - the prefinancing guarantees (if required; see Article 23)
 - the financial statements and certificates on the financial statements (CFS) (if required; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)
 - the contribution to the deliverables and technical reports (see Article 21)
 - any other documents or information required by the granting authority under the Agreement
- (iv) submit via the Portal data and information related to the participation of their affiliated entities.

(b) The coordinator must:

- (i) monitor that the action is implemented properly (see Article 11)
- (ii) act as the intermediary for all communications between the consortium and the granting authority, unless the Agreement or granting authority specifies otherwise, and in particular:
 - submit the prefinancing guarantees to the granting authority (if any)

- request and review any documents or information required and verify their quality and completeness before passing them on to the granting authority
- submit the deliverables and reports to the granting authority
- inform the granting authority about the payments made to the other beneficiaries (report on the distribution of payments; if required, see Articles 22 and 32)

(iii) distribute the payments received from the granting authority to the other beneficiaries without unjustified delay (see Article 22).

The coordinator may not delegate or subcontract the above-mentioned tasks to any other beneficiary or third party (including affiliated entities).

However, coordinators which are public bodies may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(ii) last indent and (iii) above to entities with 'authorisation to administer' which they have created or which are controlled by or affiliated to them. In this case, the coordinator retains sole responsibility for the payments and for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Moreover, coordinators which are 'sole beneficiaries'¹² (or similar, such as European research infrastructure consortia (ERICs)) may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(i) to (iii) above to one of their members. The coordinator retains sole responsibility for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must have **internal arrangements** regarding their operation and co-ordination, to ensure that the action is implemented properly.

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 1), these arrangements must be set out in a written **consortium agreement** between the beneficiaries, covering for instance:

- the internal organisation of the consortium
- the management of access to the Portal
- different distribution keys for the payments and financial responsibilities in case of recoveries (if any)
- additional rules on rights and obligations related to background and results (see Article 16)
- settlement of internal disputes
- liability, indemnification and confidentiality arrangements between the beneficiaries.

The internal arrangements must not contain any provision contrary to this Agreement.

ARTICLE 8 — AFFILIATED ENTITIES

Not applicable

¹² For the definition, see Article 187(2) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: "Where several entities satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant and together form one entity, that entity may be treated as the **sole beneficiary**, including where it is specifically established for the purpose of implementing the action financed by the grant."

ARTICLE 9 — OTHER PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN THE ACTION

9.1 Associated partners

The following entities which cooperate with a beneficiary will participate in the action as ‘associated partners’:

- **Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova (MoE-MD)**, PIC 881285741

Associated partners must implement the action tasks attributed to them in Annex 1 in accordance with Article 11. They may not charge costs or contributions to the action and the costs for their tasks are not eligible.

The tasks must be set out in Annex 1.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 11 (proper implementation), 12 (conflict of interests), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the associated partners.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the associated partners.

9.2 Third parties giving in-kind contributions to the action

Other third parties may give in-kind contributions to the action (i.e. personnel, equipment, other goods, works and services, etc. which are free-of-charge), if necessary for the implementation.

Third parties giving in-kind contributions do not implement any action tasks. They may not charge costs or contributions to the action and the costs for the in-kind contributions are not eligible.

The third parties and their in-kind contributions should be set out in Annex 1.

9.3 Subcontractors

Subcontractors may participate in the action, if necessary for the implementation.

Subcontractors must implement their action tasks in accordance with Article 11. The costs for the subcontracted tasks (invoiced price from the subcontractor) are eligible and may be charged by the beneficiaries, under the conditions set out in Article 6. The costs will be included in Annex 2 as part of the beneficiaries’ costs.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 11 (proper implementation), 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the subcontractors.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the subcontractors.

9.4 Recipients of financial support to third parties

If the action includes providing financial support to third parties (e.g. grants, prizes or similar forms of support), the beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the third parties receiving the support (recipients).

The beneficiaries must also ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the recipients.

ARTICLE 10 — PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIAL STATUS

10.1 Non-EU participants

Participants which are established in a non-EU country (if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: to use qualified external auditors which are independent and comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC¹³
- for the controls under Article 25: to allow for checks, reviews, audits and investigations (including on-the-spot checks, visits and inspections) by the bodies mentioned in that Article (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.).

Special rules on dispute settlement apply (see Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.2 Participants which are international organisations

Participants which are international organisations (IOs; if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: to use either independent public officers or external auditors which comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC
- for the controls under Article 25: to allow for the checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the bodies mentioned in that Article, taking into account the specific agreements concluded by them and the EU (if any).

¹³ Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts or similar national regulations (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

For such participants, nothing in the Agreement will be interpreted as a waiver of their privileges or immunities, as accorded by their constituent documents or international law.

Special rules on applicable law and dispute settlement apply (see Article 43 and Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.3 Pillar-assessed participants

Pillar-assessed participants (if any) may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in so far as they have been positively assessed and do not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries.

‘Pillar-assessment’ means a review by the European Commission on the systems, rules and procedures which participants use for managing EU grants (in particular internal control system, accounting system, external audits, financing of third parties, rules on recovery and exclusion, information on recipients and protection of personal data; see Article 154 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046).

Participants with a positive pillar assessment may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in particular for:

- record-keeping (Article 20): may be done in accordance with internal standards, rules and procedures
- currency conversion for financial statements (Article 21): may be done in accordance with usual accounting practices
- guarantees (Article 23): for public law bodies, prefinancing guarantees are not needed
- certificates (Article 24):
 - certificates on the financial statements (CFS): may be provided by their regular internal or external auditors and in accordance with their internal financial regulations and procedures
 - certificates on usual accounting practices (CoMUC): are not needed if those practices are covered by an ex-ante assessment

and use the following specific rules, for:

- recoveries (Article 22): in case of financial support to third parties, there will be no recovery if the participant has done everything possible to retrieve the undue amounts from the third party receiving the support (including legal proceedings) and non-recovery is not due to an error or negligence on its part
- checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the EU (Article 25): will be conducted taking into account the rules and procedures specifically agreed between them and the framework agreement (if any)
- impact evaluation (Article 26): will be conducted in accordance with the participant’s internal rules and procedures and the framework agreement (if any)
- grant agreement suspension (Article 31): certain costs incurred during grant suspension are eligible (notably, minimum costs necessary for a possible resumption of the action and costs

relating to contracts which were entered into before the pre-information letter was received and which could not reasonably be suspended, reallocated or terminated on legal grounds)

- grant agreement termination (Article 32): the final grant amount and final payment will be calculated taking into account also costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination takes effect, if the contract was entered into before the pre-information letter was received and could not reasonably be terminated on legal grounds
- liability for damages (Article 33.2): the granting authority must be compensated for damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement only if the damage is due to an infringement of the participant's internal rules and procedures or due to a violation of third parties' rights by the participant or one of its employees or individual for whom the employees are responsible.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers procurement and granting procedures may also do purchases, subcontracting and financial support to third parties (Article 6.2) in accordance with their internal rules and procedures for purchases, subcontracting and financial support.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers data protection rules may rely on their internal standards, rules and procedures for data protection (Article 15).

The participants may however not rely on provisions which would breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries or call into question the decision awarding the grant, such as in particular:

- eligibility (Article 6)
- consortium roles and set-up (Articles 7-9)
- security and ethics (Articles 13, 14)
- IPR (including background and results, access rights and rights of use), communication, dissemination and visibility (Articles 16 and 17)
- information obligation (Article 19)
- payment, reporting and amendments (Articles 21, 22 and 39)
- rejections, reductions, suspensions and terminations (Articles 27, 28, 29-32)

If the pillar assessment was subject to remedial measures, reliance on the internal systems, rules and procedures is subject to compliance with those remedial measures.

Participants whose assessment has not yet been updated to cover (the new rules on) data protection may rely on their internal systems, rules and procedures, provided that they ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes

- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and
- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data.

Participants must inform the coordinator without delay of any changes to the systems, rules and procedures that were part of the pillar assessment. The coordinator must immediately inform the granting authority.

Pillar-assessed participants that have also concluded a framework agreement with the EU, may moreover — under the same conditions as those above (i.e. not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries) — rely on the provisions set out in that framework agreement.

SECTION 2 RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

ARTICLE 11 — PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

11.1 Obligation to properly implement the action

The beneficiaries must implement the action as described in Annex 1 and in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, the call conditions and all legal obligations under applicable EU, international and national law.

11.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 12 — CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

12.1 Conflict of interests

The beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Agreement could be compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify the granting authority without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The granting authority may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.



12.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28) and the grant or the beneficiary may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 13 — CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

13.1 Sensitive information

The parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing ('sensitive information') — during the implementation of the action and for at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

If a beneficiary requests, the granting authority may agree to keep such information confidential for a longer period.

Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use sensitive information only to implement the Agreement.

The beneficiaries may disclose sensitive information to their personnel or other participants involved in the action only if they:

- (a) need to know it in order to implement the Agreement and
- (b) are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The granting authority may disclose sensitive information to its staff and to other EU institutions and bodies.

It may moreover disclose sensitive information to third parties, if:

- (a) this is necessary to implement the Agreement or safeguard the EU financial interests and
- (b) the recipients of the information are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The confidentiality obligations no longer apply if:

- (a) the disclosing party agrees to release the other party
- (b) the information becomes publicly available, without breaching any confidentiality obligation
- (c) the disclosure of the sensitive information is required by EU, international or national law.

Specific confidentiality rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.2 Classified information

The parties must handle classified information in accordance with the applicable EU, international or national law on classified information (in particular, Decision 2015/444¹⁴ and its implementing rules).

Deliverables which contain classified information must be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority.

Action tasks involving classified information may be subcontracted only after explicit approval (in writing) from the granting authority.

Classified information may not be disclosed to any third party (including participants involved in the action implementation) without prior explicit written approval from the granting authority.

Specific security rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 14 — ETHICS AND VALUES

14.1 Ethics

The action must be carried out in line with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles.

Specific ethics rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.2 Values

The beneficiaries must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

Specific rules on values (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 15 — DATA PROTECTION

15.1 Data processing by the granting authority

¹⁴ Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

Any personal data under the Agreement will be processed under the responsibility of the data controller of the granting authority in accordance with and for the purposes set out in the Portal Privacy Statement.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission, an EU regulatory or executive agency, joint undertaking or other EU body, the processing will be subject to Regulation 2018/1725¹⁵.

15.2 Data processing by the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/679¹⁶).

They must ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subjects
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and
- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data.

The beneficiaries may grant their personnel access to personal data only if it is strictly necessary for implementing, managing and monitoring the Agreement. The beneficiaries must ensure that the personnel is under a confidentiality obligation.

The beneficiaries must inform the persons whose data are transferred to the granting authority and provide them with the Portal Privacy Statement.

15.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 16 — INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS — ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE

¹⁵ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

¹⁶ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC ('GDPR') (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1).

16.1 Background and access rights to background

The beneficiaries must give each other and the other participants access to the background identified as needed for implementing the action, subject to any specific rules in Annex 5.

‘Background’ means any data, know-how or information — whatever its form or nature (tangible or intangible), including any rights such as intellectual property rights — that is:

- (a) held by the beneficiaries before they acceded to the Agreement and
- (b) needed to implement the action or exploit the results.

If background is subject to rights of a third party, the beneficiary concerned must ensure that it is able to comply with its obligations under the Agreement.

16.2 Ownership of results

The granting authority does not obtain ownership of the results produced under the action.

‘Results’ means any tangible or intangible effect of the action, such as data, know-how or information, whatever its form or nature, whether or not it can be protected, as well as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights.

16.3 Rights of use of the granting authority on materials, documents and information received for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes

The granting authority has the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the action and materials and documents received from the beneficiaries (notably summaries for publication, deliverables, as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form) for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes — during the action or afterwards.

The right to use the beneficiaries’ materials, documents and information is granted in the form of a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence, which includes the following rights:

- (a) **use for its own purposes** (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)
- (b) **distribution to the public** (in particular, publication as hard copies and in electronic or digital format, publication on the internet, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting by any channel, public display or presentation, communicating through press information services, or inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes)
- (c) **editing or redrafting** (including shortening, summarising, inserting other elements (e.g. meta-data, legends, other graphic, visual, audio or text elements), extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts, use in a compilation)
- (d) **translation**
- (e) **storage** in paper, electronic or other form

- (f) **archiving**, in line with applicable document-management rules
- (g) the right to authorise **third parties** to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties the modes of use set out in Points (b), (c), (d) and (f), if needed for the information, communication and publicity activity of the granting authority
- (h) **processing**, analysing, aggregating the materials, documents and information received and **producing derivative works**.

The rights of use are granted for the whole duration of the industrial or intellectual property rights concerned.

If materials or documents are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they comply with their obligations under this Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

Where applicable, the granting authority will insert the following information:

“© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licensed to the [name of granting authority] under conditions.”

16.4 Specific rules on IPR, results and background

Specific rules regarding intellectual property rights, results and background (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

16.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 17 — COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY

17.1 Communication — Dissemination — Promoting the action

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, the beneficiaries must promote the action and its results by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in accordance with Annex 1 and in a strategic, coherent and effective manner.

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the granting authority.

17.2 Visibility — European flag and funding statement

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, communication activities of the beneficiaries related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded



by the grant must acknowledge EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):



Funded by the
European Union



Co-funded by the
European Union



Funded by the
European Union



Co-funded by the
European Union

The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text.

Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of beneficiaries or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of their obligations under this Article, the beneficiaries may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from the granting authority. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

17.3 Quality of information — Disclaimer

Any communication or dissemination activity related to the action must use factually accurate information.

Moreover, it must indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):

“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or [name of the granting authority]. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.”

17.4 Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules

Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

17.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 18 — SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

18.1 Specific rules for carrying out the action

Specific rules for implementing the action (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

18.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

SECTION 3 GRANT ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE 19 — GENERAL INFORMATION OBLIGATIONS

19.1 Information requests

The beneficiaries must provide — during the action or afterwards and in accordance with Article 7 — any information requested in order to verify eligibility of the costs or contributions declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with the other obligations under the Agreement.

The information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

19.2 Participant Register data updates

The beneficiaries must keep — at all times, during the action or afterwards — their information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date, in particular, their name, address, legal representatives, legal form and organisation type.

19.3 Information about events and circumstances which impact the action

The beneficiaries must immediately inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) of any of the following:

- (a) **events** which are likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action or affect the EU's financial interests, in particular:
 - (i) changes in their legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour signed before grant signature)

(ii) linked action information: not applicable

(b) **circumstances** affecting:

- (i) the decision to award the grant or
- (ii) compliance with requirements under the Agreement.

19.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 20 — RECORD-KEEPING

20.1 Keeping records and supporting documents

The beneficiaries must — at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6) — keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the action in line with the accepted standards in the respective field (if any).

In addition, the beneficiaries must — for the same period — keep the following to justify the amounts declared:

- (a) for actual costs: adequate records and supporting documents to prove the costs declared (such as contracts, subcontracts, invoices and accounting records); in addition, the beneficiaries' usual accounting and internal control procedures must enable direct reconciliation between the amounts declared, the amounts recorded in their accounts and the amounts stated in the supporting documents
- (b) for flat-rate costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the eligibility of the costs or contributions to which the flat-rate is applied
- (c) for the following simplified costs and contributions: the beneficiaries do not need to keep specific records on the actual costs incurred, but must keep:
 - (i) for unit costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the number of units declared
 - (ii) for lump sum costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove proper implementation of the work as described in Annex 1
 - (iii) for financing not linked to costs (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the achievement of the results or the fulfilment of the conditions as described in Annex 1
- (d) for unit, flat-rate and lump sum costs and contributions according to usual cost accounting practices (if any): the beneficiaries must keep any adequate records and supporting documents to prove that their cost accounting practices have been applied in a consistent manner, based on

objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding, and that they comply with the eligibility conditions set out in Articles 6.1 and 6.2.

Moreover, the following is needed for specific budget categories:

- (e) for personnel costs: time worked for the beneficiary under the action must be supported by declarations signed monthly by the person and their supervisor, unless another reliable time-record system is in place; the granting authority may accept alternative evidence supporting the time worked for the action declared, if it considers that it offers an adequate level of assurance
- (f) additional record-keeping rules: not applicable

The records and supporting documents must be made available upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

If there are on-going checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims under the Agreement (including the extension of findings; see Article 25), the beneficiaries must keep these records and other supporting documentation until the end of these procedures.

The beneficiaries must keep the original documents. Digital and digitalised documents are considered originals if they are authorised by the applicable national law. The granting authority may accept non-original documents if they offer a comparable level of assurance.

20.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, costs or contributions insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 21 — REPORTING

21.1 Continuous reporting

The beneficiaries must continuously report on the progress of the action (e.g. **deliverables**, **milestones**, **outputs/outcomes**, **critical risks**, **indicators**, etc; if any), in the Portal Continuous Reporting tool and in accordance with the timing and conditions it sets out (as agreed with the granting authority).

Standardised deliverables (e.g. progress reports not linked to payments, reports on cumulative expenditure, special reports, etc; if any) must be submitted using the templates published on the Portal.

21.2 Periodic reporting: Technical reports and financial statements

In addition, the beneficiaries must provide reports to request payments, in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2):

- for additional prefinancings (if any): an **additional prefinancing report**
- for interim payments (if any) and the final payment: a **periodic report**.

The prefinancing and periodic reports include a technical and financial part.

The technical part includes an overview of the action implementation. It must be prepared using the template available in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool.

The financial part of the additional prefinancing report includes a statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment.

The financial part of the periodic report includes:

- the financial statements (individual and consolidated; for all beneficiaries/affiliated entities)
- the explanation on the use of resources (or detailed cost reporting table, if required)
- the certificates on the financial statements (CFS) (if required; see Article 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3).

The **financial statements** must detail the eligible costs and contributions for each budget category and, for the final payment, also the revenues for the action (see Articles 6 and 22).

All eligible costs and contributions incurred should be declared, even if they exceed the amounts indicated in the estimated budget (see Annex 2). Amounts that are not declared in the individual financial statements will not be taken into account by the granting authority.

By signing the financial statements (directly in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool), the beneficiaries confirm that:

- the information provided is complete, reliable and true
- the costs and contributions declared are eligible (see Article 6)
- the costs and contributions can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documents (see Article 20) that will be produced upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Article 25)
- for the final periodic report: all the revenues have been declared (if required; see Article 22).

Beneficiaries will have to submit also the financial statements of their affiliated entities (if any). In case of recoveries (see Article 22), beneficiaries will be held responsible also for the financial statements of their affiliated entities.

21.3 Currency for financial statements and conversion into euros

The financial statements must be drafted in euro.

Beneficiaries with general accounts established in a currency other than the euro must convert the costs recorded in their accounts into euro, at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union* (ECB website), calculated over the corresponding reporting period.

If no daily euro exchange rate is published in the *Official Journal* for the currency in question, they must be converted at the average of the monthly accounting exchange rates published on the European Commission website (InforEuro), calculated over the corresponding reporting period.

Beneficiaries with general accounts in euro must convert costs incurred in another currency into euro according to their usual accounting practices.

21.4 Reporting language

The reporting must be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

21.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a report submitted does not comply with this Article, the granting authority may suspend the payment deadline (see Article 29) and apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

If the coordinator breaches its reporting obligations, the granting authority may terminate the grant or the coordinator's participation (see Article 32) or apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 22 — PAYMENTS AND RECOVERIES — CALCULATION OF AMOUNTS DUE

22.1 Payments and payment arrangements

Payments will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

They will be made in euro to the bank account indicated by the coordinator (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) and must be distributed without unjustified delay (restrictions may apply to distribution of the initial prefinancing payment; see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

Payments to this bank account will discharge the granting authority from its payment obligation.

The cost of payment transfers will be borne as follows:

- the granting authority bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank
- the beneficiary bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank
- the party causing a repetition of a transfer bears all costs of the repeated transfer.

Payments by the granting authority will be considered to have been carried out on the date when they are debited to its account.

22.2 Recoveries

Recoveries will be made, if — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — it turns out that the granting authority has paid too much and needs to recover the amounts undue.

The general liability regime for recoveries (first-line liability) is as follows: At final payment, the coordinator will be fully liable for recoveries, even if it has not been the final recipient of the undue amounts. At beneficiary termination or after final payment, recoveries will be made directly against the beneficiaries concerned.

Beneficiaries will be fully liable for repaying the debts of their affiliated entities.

In case of enforced recoveries (see Article 22.4):

- the beneficiaries will be jointly and severally liable for repaying debts of another beneficiary under the Agreement (including late-payment interest), if required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)
- affiliated entities will be held liable for repaying debts of their beneficiaries under the Agreement (including late-payment interest), if required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4).

22.3 Amounts due

22.3.1 Prefinancing payments

The aim of the prefinancing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float.

It remains the property of the EU until the final payment.

For **initial prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

For **additional prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are also set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2). However, if the statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment shows that less than 70% was used, the amount set out in the Data Sheet will be reduced by the difference between the 70% threshold and the amount used.

Prefinancing payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.2 Amount due at beneficiary termination — Recovery

In case of beneficiary termination, the granting authority will determine the provisional amount due for the beneficiary concerned. Payments (if any) will be made with the next interim or final payment.

The **amount due** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary for all reporting periods, by calculating the 'maximum EU contribution to costs' (applying the funding rate to the accepted costs of the beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs and CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the ‘total accepted EU contribution’ for the beneficiary.

The **balance** is then calculated by deducting the payments received (if any; see report on the distribution of payments in Article 32), from the total accepted EU contribution:

{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary
minus
{prefinancing and interim payments received (if any)}{}}.

If the balance is **positive**, the amount will be included in the next interim or final payment to the consortium.

If the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount due, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered and ask this amount to be paid to the coordinator (**confirmation letter**).

The amounts will later on also be taken into account for the next interim or final payment.

22.3.3 Interim payments

Interim payments reimburse the eligible costs and contributions claimed for the implementation of the action during the reporting periods (if any).

Interim payments (if any) will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the periodic report. Its approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of its content.

The **interim payment** will be calculated by the granting authority in the following steps:

- Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution
- Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will calculate the ‘accepted EU contribution’ for the action for the reporting period, by first calculating the ‘maximum EU contribution to costs’ (applying the funding rate to the accepted costs of each beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs, and CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions from beneficiary termination (if any). The resulting amount is the ‘total accepted EU contribution’.

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

The resulting amount is then capped to ensure that the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments (if any) does not exceed the interim payment ceiling set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Interim payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries’ consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.4 Final payment — Final grant amount — Revenues and Profit — Recovery

The final payment (payment of the balance) reimburses the remaining part of the eligible costs and contributions claimed for the implementation of the action (if any).

The final payment will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the final periodic report. Its approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of its content.

The **final grant amount for the action** will be calculated in the following steps:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘accepted EU contribution’ for the action for all reporting periods, by calculating the ‘maximum EU contribution to costs’ (applying the funding rate to the total accepted costs of each beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs, CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the ‘total accepted EU contribution’.

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

If the resulting amount is higher than the maximum grant amount set out in Article 5.2, it will be limited to the latter.

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

If the no-profit rule is provided for in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2), the grant must not produce a profit (i.e. surplus of the amount obtained following Step 2 plus the action's revenues, over the eligible costs and contributions approved by the granting authority).

‘Revenue’ is all income generated by the action, during its duration (see Article 4), for beneficiaries that are profit legal entities.

If there is a profit, it will be deducted in proportion to the final rate of reimbursement of the eligible costs approved by the granting authority (as compared to the amount calculated following Steps 1 and 2 minus the contributions).

The **balance** (final payment) is then calculated by deducting the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments already made (if any), from the final grant amount:

{final grant amount
minus
{prefinancing and interim payments made (if any)} }.

If the balance is **positive**, it will be **paid** to the coordinator.

The final payment (or part of it) may be offset (without the beneficiaries’ consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

If the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the final grant amount, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered (**confirmation letter**), together with a **debit note** with the terms and date for payment.

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.3.5 Audit implementation after final payment — Revised final grant amount — Recovery

If — after the final payment (in particular, after checks, reviews, audits or investigations; see

Article 25) — the granting authority rejects costs or contributions (see Article 27) or reduces the grant (see Article 28), it will calculate the **revised final grant amount** for the beneficiary concerned.

The **beneficiary revised final grant amount** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘revised accepted EU contribution’ for the beneficiary, by calculating the ‘revised accepted costs’ and ‘revised accepted contributions’.

After that, it will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting ‘revised total accepted EU contribution’ is the beneficiary revised final grant amount.

If the revised final grant amount is lower than the beneficiary’s final grant amount (i.e. its share in the final grant amount for the action), it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The **beneficiary final grant amount** (i.e. share in the final grant amount for the action) is calculated as follows:

{ {total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary
divided by
total accepted EU contribution for the action}
multiplied by
final grant amount for the action}.

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered (**confirmation letter**), together with a **debit note** with the terms and the date for payment.

Recoveries against affiliated entities (if any) will be handled through their beneficiaries.

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.4 Enforced recovery

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the amount due will be recovered:

- (a) by offsetting the amount — without the coordinator or beneficiary’s consent — against any amounts owed to the coordinator or beneficiary by the granting authority.

In exceptional circumstances, to safeguard the EU financial interests, the amount may be offset before the payment date specified in the debit note.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, debts may also be offset against amounts owed by other Commission services or executive agencies.

- (b) by drawing on the financial guarantee(s) (if any)
- (c) by holding other beneficiaries jointly and severally liable (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)
- (d) by holding affiliated entities jointly and severally liable (if any, see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)
- (e) by taking legal action (see Article 43) or, provided that the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, by adopting an enforceable decision under Article 299 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 100(2) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

The amount to be recovered will be increased by **late-payment interest** at the rate set out in Article 22.5, from the day following the payment date in the debit note, up to and including the date the full payment is received.

Partial payments will be first credited against expenses, charges and late-payment interest and then against the principal.

Bank charges incurred in the recovery process will be borne by the beneficiary, unless Directive 2015/2366¹⁷ applies.

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency, enforced recovery by offsetting or enforceable decision will be done by the services of the European Commission (see also Article 43).

22.5 Consequences of non-compliance

22.5.1 If the granting authority does not pay within the payment deadlines (see above), the beneficiaries are entitled to **late-payment interest** at the rate applied by the European Central Bank (ECB) for its main refinancing operations in euros ('reference rate'), plus the rate specified in the Data Sheet (Point 4.2). The reference rate is the rate in force on the first day of the month in which the payment deadline expires, as published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

If the late-payment interest is lower than or equal to EUR 200, it will be paid to the coordinator only on request submitted within two months of receiving the late payment.

Late-payment interest is not due if all beneficiaries are EU Member States (including regional and local government authorities or other public bodies acting on behalf of a Member State for the purpose of this Agreement).

If payments or the payment deadline are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30), payment will not be considered as late.

¹⁷ Directive (EU) 2015/2366 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on payment services in the internal market, amending Directives 2002/65/EC, 2009/110/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, and repealing Directive 2007/64/EC (OJ L 337, 23.12.2015, p. 35).

Late-payment interest covers the period running from the day following the due date for payment (see above), up to and including the date of payment.

Late-payment interest is not considered for the purposes of calculating the final grant amount.

22.5.2 If the coordinator breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28) and the grant or the coordinator may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 23 — GUARANTEES

23.1 Prefinancing guarantee

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2), the beneficiaries must provide (one or more) prefinancing guarantee(s) in accordance with the timing and the amounts set out in the Data Sheet.

The coordinator must submit them to the granting authority in due time before the prefinancing they are linked to.

The guarantees must be drawn up using the template published on the Portal and fulfil the following conditions:

- (a) be provided by a bank or approved financial institution established in the EU or — if requested by the coordinator and accepted by the granting authority — by a third party or a bank or financial institution established outside the EU offering equivalent security
- (b) the guarantor stands as first-call guarantor and does not require the granting authority to first have recourse against the principal debtor (i.e. the beneficiary concerned) and
- (c) remain explicitly in force until the final payment and, if the final payment takes the form of a recovery, until five months after the debit note is notified to a beneficiary.

They will be released within the following month.

23.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If the beneficiaries breach their obligation to provide the prefinancing guarantee, the prefinancing will not be paid.

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 24 — CERTIFICATES

24.1 Operational verification report (OVR)

Not applicable

24.2 Certificate on the financial statements (CFS)

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.3), the beneficiaries must provide

certificates on their financial statements (CFS), in accordance with the schedule, threshold and conditions set out in the Data Sheet.

The coordinator must submit them as part of the periodic report (see Article 21).

The certificates must be drawn up using the template published on the Portal, cover the costs declared on the basis of actual costs and costs according to usual cost accounting practices (if any), and fulfil the following conditions:

- (a) be provided by a qualified approved external auditor which is independent and complies with Directive 2006/43/EC¹⁸ (or for public bodies: by a competent independent public officer)
- (b) the verification must be carried out according to the highest professional standards to ensure that the financial statements comply with the provisions under the Agreement and that the costs declared are eligible.

The certificates will not affect the granting authority's right to carry out its own checks, reviews or audits, nor preclude the European Court of Auditors (ECA), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) or the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) from using their prerogatives for audits and investigations under the Agreement (see Article 25).

If the costs (or a part of them) were already audited by the granting authority, these costs do not need to be covered by the certificate and will not be counted for calculating the threshold (if any).

24.3 Certificate on the compliance of usual cost accounting practices (CoMUC)

Not applicable

24.4 Systems and process audit (SPA)

Not applicable

24.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary does not submit a certificate on the financial statements (CFS) or the certificate is rejected, the accepted EU contribution to costs will be capped to reflect the CFS threshold.

If a beneficiary breaches any of its other obligations under this Article, the granting authority may apply the measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 25 — CHECKS, REVIEWS, AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS — EXTENSION OF FINDINGS

25.1 Granting authority checks, reviews and audits

25.1.1 Internal checks

The granting authority may — during the action or afterwards — check the proper implementation of

¹⁸ Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts or similar national regulations (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement, including assessing costs and contributions, deliverables and reports.

25.1.2 Project reviews

The granting authority may carry out reviews on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement (general project reviews or specific issues reviews).

Such project reviews may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent, outside experts. If it uses outside experts, the coordinator or beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information and data in addition to deliverables and reports already submitted (including information on the use of resources). The granting authority may request beneficiaries to provide such information to it directly. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may be requested to participate in meetings, including with the outside experts.

For **on-the-spot visits**, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including to the outside experts) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the review findings, a **project review report** will be drawn up.

The granting authority will formally notify the project review report to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations.

Project reviews (including project review reports) will be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

25.1.3 Audits

The granting authority may carry out audits on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Such audits may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

The granting authority may use its own audit service, delegate audits to a centralised service or use external audit firms. If it uses an external firm, the beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data) to verify compliance with the Agreement. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

For **on-the-spot** visits, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including for the external audit firm) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the audit findings, a **draft audit report** will be drawn up.

The auditors will formally notify the draft audit report to the beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations (contradictory audit procedure).

The **final audit report** will take into account observations by the beneficiary concerned and will be formally notified to them.

Audits (including audit reports) will be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

25.2 European Commission checks, reviews and audits in grants of other granting authorities

Where the granting authority is not the European Commission, the latter has the same rights of checks, reviews and audits as the granting authority.

25.3 Access to records for assessing simplified forms of funding

The beneficiaries must give the European Commission access to their statutory records for the periodic assessment of simplified forms of funding which are used in EU programmes.

25.4 OLAF, EPPO and ECA audits and investigations

The following bodies may also carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations — during the action or afterwards:

- the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) under Regulations No 883/2013¹⁹ and No 2185/96²⁰
- the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) under Regulation 2017/1939
- the European Court of Auditors (ECA) under Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 257 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

¹⁹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18/09/2013, p. 1).

²⁰ Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292, 15/11/1996, p. 2).

If requested by these bodies, the beneficiary concerned must provide full, accurate and complete information in the format requested (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data, including in electronic format) and allow access to sites and premises for on-the-spot visits or inspections — as provided for under these Regulations.

To this end, the beneficiary concerned must keep all relevant information relating to the action, at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (Point 6) and, in any case, until any ongoing checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims have been concluded.

25.5 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations — Extension of results of reviews, audits or investigations

25.5.1 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations in this grant

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations carried out in the context of this grant may lead to rejections (see Article 27), grant reduction (see Article 28) or other measures described in Chapter 5.

Rejections or grant reductions after the final payment will lead to a revised final grant amount (see Article 22).

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations during the action implementation may lead to a request for amendment (see Article 39), to change the description of the action set out in Annex 1.

Checks, reviews, audits or investigations that find systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations in any EU grant may also lead to consequences in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions ('extension to other grants').

Moreover, findings arising from an OLAF or EPPO investigation may lead to criminal prosecution under national law.

25.5.2 Extension from other grants

Results of checks, reviews, audits or investigations in other grants may be extended to this grant, if:

- (a) the beneficiary concerned is found, in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions, to have committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant and
- (b) those findings are formally notified to the beneficiary concerned — together with the list of grants affected by the findings — within the time-limit for audits set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned of the intention to extend the findings and the list of grants affected.

If the extension concerns **rejections of costs or contributions**: the notification will include:

- (a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings
- (b) the request to submit revised financial statements for all grants affected
- (c) the correction rate for extrapolation, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors, to calculate the amounts to be rejected, if the beneficiary concerned:

- (i) considers that the submission of revised financial statements is not possible or practicable or
- (ii) does not submit revised financial statements.

If the extension concerns **grant reductions**: the notification will include:

- (a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings and
- (b) the **correction rate for extrapolation**, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors and the principle of proportionality.

The beneficiary concerned has **60 days** from receiving notification to submit observations, revised financial statements or to propose a duly substantiated **alternative correction method/rate**.

On the basis of this, the granting authority will analyse the impact and decide on the implementation (i.e. start rejection or grant reduction procedures, either on the basis of the revised financial statements or the announced/alternative method/rate or a mix of those; see Articles 27 and 28).

25.6 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, costs or contributions insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 26 — IMPACT EVALUATIONS

26.1 Impact evaluation

The granting authority may carry out impact evaluations of the action, measured against the objectives and indicators of the EU programme funding the grant.

Such evaluations may be started during implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiaries and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent outside experts.

The coordinator or beneficiaries must provide any information relevant to evaluate the impact of the action, including information in electronic format.

26.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the granting authority may apply the measures described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

SECTION 1 REJECTIONS AND GRANT REDUCTION

ARTICLE 27 — REJECTION OF COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

27.1 Conditions

The granting authority will — at beneficiary termination, interim payment, final payment or afterwards — reject any costs or contributions which are ineligible (see Article 6), in particular following checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

The rejection may also be based on the extension of findings from other grants to this grant (see Article 25).

Ineligible costs or contributions will be rejected.

27.2 Procedure

If the rejection does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the rejection, the amounts and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the rejection (payment review procedure).

If the rejection leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

27.3 Effects

If the granting authority rejects costs or contributions, it will deduct them from the costs or contributions declared and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

ARTICLE 28 — GRANT REDUCTION

28.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — reduce the grant for a beneficiary, if:

- (a) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:
 - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
 - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants

awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (see Article 25).

The amount of the reduction will be calculated for each beneficiary concerned and proportionate to the seriousness and the duration of the errors, irregularities or fraud or breach of obligations, by applying an individual reduction rate to their accepted EU contribution.

28.2 Procedure

If the grant reduction does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the reduction, the amount to be reduced and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the reduction (payment review procedure).

If the grant reduction leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

28.3 Effects

If the granting authority reduces the grant, it will deduct the reduction and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

SECTION 2 SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION

ARTICLE 29 — PAYMENT DEADLINE SUSPENSION

29.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend the payment deadline if a payment cannot be processed because:

- (a) the required report (see Article 21) has not been submitted or is not complete or additional information is needed
- (b) there are doubts about the amount to be paid (e.g. ongoing audit extension procedure, queries about eligibility, need for a grant reduction, etc.) and additional checks, reviews, audits or investigations are necessary, or
- (c) there are other issues affecting the EU financial interests.

29.2 Procedure

The granting authority will formally notify the coordinator of the suspension and the reasons why.

The suspension will **take effect** the day the notification is sent.

If the conditions for suspending the payment deadline are no longer met, the suspension will be **lifted** — and the remaining time to pay (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) will resume.

If the suspension exceeds two months, the coordinator may request the granting authority to confirm if the suspension will continue.

If the payment deadline has been suspended due to the non-compliance of the report and the revised report is not submitted (or was submitted but is also rejected), the granting authority may also terminate the grant or the participation of the coordinator (see Article 32).

ARTICLE 30 — PAYMENT SUSPENSION

30.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend payments, in whole or in part for one or more beneficiaries, if:

- (a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:
 - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
 - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant.

If payments are suspended for one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will make partial payment(s) for the part(s) not suspended. If suspension concerns the final payment, the payment (or recovery) of the remaining amount after suspension is lifted will be considered to be the payment that closes the action.

30.2 Procedure

Before suspending payments, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend payments and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

At the end of the suspension procedure, the granting authority will also inform the coordinator.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent.

If the conditions for resuming payments are met, the suspension will be **lifted**. The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned (and the coordinator) and set the suspension end date.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid to the beneficiaries concerned. For interim payments, the periodic reports for all reporting periods except the last one (see Article 21) must not contain any financial statements from the beneficiary concerned (or its affiliated entities). The coordinator must include them in the next periodic report after the suspension is lifted or — if suspension is not lifted before the end of the action — in the last periodic report.

ARTICLE 31 — GRANT AGREEMENT SUSPENSION

31.1 Consortium-requested GA suspension

31.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the suspension of the grant or any part of it, if exceptional circumstances — in particular *force majeure* (see Article 35) — make implementation impossible or excessively difficult.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the suspension takes effect; this date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request and
- the expected date of resumption.

The suspension will **take effect** on the day specified in the amendment.

Once circumstances allow for implementation to resume, the coordinator must immediately request another **amendment** of the Agreement to set the suspension end date, the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the amendment. This date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant suspension are not eligible (see Article 6.3).

31.2 EU-initiated GA suspension

31.2.1 Conditions

The granting authority may suspend the grant or any part of it, if:

- (a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:
 - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
 - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions,

submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or

(b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant

(c) other:

- (i) linked action issues: not applicable
- (ii) additional GA suspension grounds: not applicable.

31.2.2 Procedure

Before suspending the grant, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend the grant and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification).

Once the conditions for resuming implementation of the action are met, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator a **lifting of suspension letter**, in which it will set the suspension end date and invite the coordinator to request an amendment of the Agreement to set the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the lifting of suspension letter. This date may be before the date on which the letter is sent.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during suspension are not eligible (see Article 6.3).

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to suspension by the granting authority (see Article 33).

Grant suspension does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant or a beneficiary (see Article 32) or reduce the grant (see Article 28).

ARTICLE 32 — GRANT AGREEMENT OR BENEFICIARY TERMINATION

32.1 Consortium-requested GA termination

32.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the termination of the grant.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the consortium ends work on the action ('end of work date') and
- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no reasons are given or if the granting authority considers the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the grant terminated improperly.

32.1.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after the end of work are not eligible.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Improper termination may lead to a grant reduction (see Article 28).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.2 Consortium-requested beneficiary termination

32.2.1 Conditions and procedure

The coordinator may request the termination of the participation of one or more beneficiaries, on request of the beneficiary concerned or on behalf of the other beneficiaries.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the opinion of the beneficiary concerned (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing)
- the date the beneficiary ends work on the action ('end of work date')

- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

If the termination concerns the coordinator and is done without its agreement, the amendment request must be submitted by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the consortium).

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no information is given or if the granting authority considers that the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the beneficiary to have been terminated improperly.

32.2.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

- (i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned
- (ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work, the financial statement, the explanation on the use of resources, and, if applicable, the certificate on the financial statement (CFS; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)
- (iii) a second **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with other amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after the end of work are not eligible.

The information in the termination report must also be included in the periodic report for the next reporting period (see Article 21).

If the granting authority does not receive the termination report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the second request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the second request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

Improper termination may lead to a reduction of the grant (see Article 31) or grant termination (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.3 EU-initiated GA or beneficiary termination

32.3.1 Conditions

The granting authority may terminate the grant or the participation of one or more beneficiaries, if:

- (a) one or more beneficiaries do not accede to the Agreement (see Article 40)
- (b) a change to the action or the legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation of a beneficiary is likely to substantially affect the implementation of the action or calls into question the decision to award the grant (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour)
- (c) following termination of one or more beneficiaries, the necessary changes to the Agreement (and their impact on the action) would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants
- (d) implementation of the action has become impossible or the changes necessary for its continuation would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants
- (e) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is subject to bankruptcy proceedings or similar (including insolvency, winding-up, administration by a liquidator or court, arrangement with creditors, suspension of business activities, etc.)
- (f) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is in breach of social security or tax obligations
- (g) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has been found guilty of grave professional misconduct
- (h) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed fraud, corruption, or is involved in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking
- (i) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) was created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin (or created another entity with this purpose)
- (j) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:

- (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
- (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.)
- (k) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings from other grants to this grant; see Article 25)
- (l) despite a specific request by the granting authority, a beneficiary does not request — through the coordinator — an amendment to the Agreement to end the participation of one of its affiliated entities or associated partners that is in one of the situations under points (d), (f), (e), (g), (h), (i) or (j) and to reallocate its tasks, or
- (m) other:
 - (i) linked action issues: not applicable
 - (ii) additional GA termination grounds: not applicable.

32.3.2 Procedure

Before terminating the grant or participation of one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to terminate and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the termination and the date it will take effect (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

For beneficiary terminations, the granting authority will — at the end of the procedure — also inform the coordinator.

The termination will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification; ‘termination date’).

32.3.3 Effects

(a) for **GA termination**:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the last open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities

implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination are not eligible.

If the grant is terminated for breach of the obligation to submit reports, the coordinator may not submit any report after termination.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Termination does not affect the granting authority's right to reduce the grant (see Article 28) or to impose administrative sanctions (see Article 34).

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to termination by the granting authority (see Article 33).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

(b) for beneficiary termination:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

- (i) **a report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned
- (ii) **a termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work, the financial statement, the explanation on the use of resources, and, if applicable, the certificate on the financial statement (CFS; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)
- (iii) **a request for amendment** (see Article 39) with any amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination are not eligible.

The information in the termination report must also be included in the periodic report for the next reporting period (see Article 21).

If the granting authority does not receive the termination report within the deadline, only costs and contributions included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

SECTION 3 OTHER CONSEQUENCES: DAMAGES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

ARTICLE 33 — DAMAGES

33.1 Liability of the granting authority

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the beneficiaries or to third parties as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement, including for gross negligence.

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the beneficiaries or other participants involved in the action, as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement.

33.2 Liability of the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must compensate the granting authority for any damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement, provided that it was caused by gross negligence or wilful act.

The liability does not extend to indirect or consequential losses or similar damage (such as loss of profit, loss of revenue or loss of contracts), provided such damage was not caused by wilful act or by a breach of confidentiality.

ARTICLE 34 — ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES

Nothing in this Agreement may be construed as preventing the adoption of administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion from EU award procedures and/or financial penalties) or other public law measures, in addition or as an alternative to the contractual measures provided under this Agreement (see, for instance, Articles 135 to 145 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046 and Articles 4 and 7 of Regulation 2988/95²¹).

²¹ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

SECTION 4 FORCE MAJEURE

ARTICLE 35 — FORCE MAJEURE

A party prevented by force majeure from fulfilling its obligations under the Agreement cannot be considered in breach of them.

‘Force majeure’ means any situation or event that:

- prevents either party from fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement,
- was unforeseeable, exceptional situation and beyond the parties’ control,
- was not due to error or negligence on their part (or on the part of other participants involved in the action), and
- proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising all due diligence.

Any situation constituting force majeure must be formally notified to the other party without delay, stating the nature, likely duration and foreseeable effects.

The parties must immediately take all the necessary steps to limit any damage due to force majeure and do their best to resume implementation of the action as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 6 FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 36 — COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES

36.1 Forms and means of communication — Electronic management

EU grants are managed fully electronically through the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (‘Portal’).

All communications must be made electronically through the Portal, in accordance with the Portal Terms and Conditions and using the forms and templates provided there (except if explicitly instructed otherwise by the granting authority).

Communications must be made in writing and clearly identify the grant agreement (project number and acronym).

Communications must be made by persons authorised according to the Portal Terms and Conditions. For naming the authorised persons, each beneficiary must have designated — before the signature of this Agreement — a ‘legal entity appointed representative (LEAR)’. The role and tasks of the LEAR are stipulated in their appointment letter (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, instructions will be given on the Portal.

36.2 Date of communication

The sending date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time of sending, as indicated by the time logs.

The receiving date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time the communication is accessed, as indicated by the time logs. Formal notifications that have not been accessed within 10 days after sending, will be considered to have been accessed (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If a communication is exceptionally made on paper (by e-mail or postal service), general principles apply (i.e. date of sending/receipt). Formal notifications by registered post with proof of delivery will be considered to have been received either on the delivery date registered by the postal service or the deadline for collection at the post office.

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, the sending party cannot be considered in breach of its obligation to send a communication within a specified deadline.

36.3 Addresses for communication

The Portal can be accessed via the Europa website.

The address for paper communications to the granting authority (if exceptionally allowed) is the official mailing address indicated on its website.

For beneficiaries, it is the legal address specified in the Portal Participant Register.

ARTICLE 37 — INTERPRETATION OF THE AGREEMENT

The provisions in the Data Sheet take precedence over the rest of the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement.

Annex 5 takes precedence over the Terms and Conditions; the Terms and Conditions take precedence over the Annexes other than Annex 5.

Annex 2 takes precedence over Annex 1.

ARTICLE 38 — CALCULATION OF PERIODS AND DEADLINES

In accordance with Regulation No 1182/71²², periods expressed in days, months or years are calculated from the moment the triggering event occurs.

The day during which that event occurs is not considered as falling within the period.

‘Days’ means calendar days, not working days.

ARTICLE 39 — AMENDMENTS

39.1 Conditions

The Agreement may be amended, unless the amendment entails changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

²² Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1182/71 of the Council of 3 June 1971 determining the rules applicable to periods, dates and time-limits (OJ L 124, 8/6/1971, p. 1).

Amendments may be requested by any of the parties.

39.2 Procedure

The party requesting an amendment must submit a request for amendment signed directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

The coordinator submits and receives requests for amendment on behalf of the beneficiaries (see Annex 3). If a change of coordinator is requested without its agreement, the submission must be done by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the other beneficiaries).

The request for amendment must include:

- the reasons why
- the appropriate supporting documents and
- for a change of coordinator without its agreement: the opinion of the coordinator (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing).

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the party receiving the request agrees, it must sign the amendment in the tool within 45 days of receiving notification (or any additional information the granting authority has requested). If it does not agree, it must formally notify its disagreement within the same deadline. The deadline may be extended, if necessary for the assessment of the request. If no notification is received within the deadline, the request is considered to have been rejected.

An amendment **enters into force** on the day of the signature of the receiving party.

An amendment **takes effect** on the date of entry into force or other date specified in the amendment.

ARTICLE 40 — ACCESSION AND ADDITION OF NEW BENEFICIARIES

40.1 Accession of the beneficiaries mentioned in the Preamble

The beneficiaries which are not coordinator must accede to the grant by signing the accession form (see Annex 3) directly in the Portal Grant Preparation tool, within 30 days after the entry into force of the Agreement (see Article 44).

They will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of its entry into force (see Article 44).

If a beneficiary does not accede to the grant within the above deadline, the coordinator must — within 30 days — request an amendment (see Article 39) to terminate the beneficiary and make any changes necessary to ensure proper implementation of the action. This does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant (see Article 32).

40.2 Addition of new beneficiaries

In justified cases, the beneficiaries may request the addition of a new beneficiary.

For this purpose, the coordinator must submit a request for amendment in accordance with Article 39. It must include an accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

New beneficiaries will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of their accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

Additions are also possible in mono-beneficiary grants.

ARTICLE 41 — TRANSFER OF THE AGREEMENT

In justified cases, the beneficiary of a mono-beneficiary grant may request the transfer of the grant to a new beneficiary, provided that this would not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

The beneficiary must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with

- the reasons why
- the accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool and
- additional supporting documents (if required by the granting authority).

The new beneficiary will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

ARTICLE 42 — ASSIGNMENTS OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT AGAINST THE GRANTING AUTHORITY

The beneficiaries may not assign any of their claims for payment against the granting authority to any third party, except if expressly approved in writing by the granting authority on the basis of a reasoned, written request by the coordinator (on behalf of the beneficiary concerned).

If the granting authority has not accepted the assignment or if the terms of it are not observed, the assignment will have no effect on it.

In no circumstances will an assignment release the beneficiaries from their obligations towards the granting authority.

ARTICLE 43 — APPLICABLE LAW AND SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

43.1 Applicable law

The Agreement is governed by the applicable EU law, supplemented if necessary by the law of Belgium.

Special rules may apply for beneficiaries which are international organisations (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5).

43.2 Dispute settlement

If a dispute concerns the interpretation, application or validity of the Agreement, the parties must bring action before the EU General Court — or, on appeal, the EU Court of Justice — under Article 272 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

For non-EU beneficiaries (if any), such disputes must be brought before the courts of Brussels, Belgium — unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements.

For beneficiaries with arbitration as special dispute settlement forum (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5), the dispute will — in the absence of an amicable settlement — be settled in accordance with the Rules for Arbitration published on the Portal.

If a dispute concerns administrative sanctions, offsetting or an enforceable decision under Article 299 TFEU (see Articles 22 and 34), the beneficiaries must bring action before the General Court — or, on appeal, the Court of Justice — under Article 263 TFEU.

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency (see Preamble), actions against offsetting and enforceable decisions must be brought against the European Commission (not against the granting authority; see also Article 22).

ARTICLE 44 — ENTRY INTO FORCE

The Agreement will enter into force on the day of signature by the granting authority or the coordinator, depending on which is later.

SIGNATURES

For the coordinator

For the granting authority

ANNEX 1



Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)

Description of the action (DoA)

Part A

Part B

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION (PART A)

COVER PAGE

Part A of the Description of the Action (DoA) must be completed directly on the Portal Grant Preparation screens.

PROJECT	
<i>Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Enter the info.</i>	
Project number:	101148675
Project name:	Roadmap for the alignment of EMERALD network establishment and management to NATURA 2000 standards in Moldova
Project acronym:	LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA
Call:	LIFE-2023-PLP
Topic:	LIFE-2023-PLP-NAT-ENV
Type of action:	LIFE-PJG
Service:	CINEA/D/02
Project starting date:	first day of the month following the entry into force date
Project duration:	24 months

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List of work packages	4
Staff effort	23
List of deliverables	24
List of milestones (outputs/outcomes)	33
List of critical risks	34



PROJECT SUMMARY

Project summary

Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Provide an overall description of your project (including context and overall objectives, planned activities and main achievements, and expected results and impacts (on target groups, change procedures, capacities, innovation etc)). This summary should give readers a clear idea of what your project is about.

Use the project summary from your proposal.

LIFE RENATA aims at supporting the Republic of Moldova in advancing the establishment and management of the Emerald Network of protected sites and to move closer to the EU standards for the conservation of species and habitats, by providing support in the following horizontal fundamental areas:

Legal

a) Assessment on the legal and Institutional framework, and its distance to correspondence to the EU Nature Directives implementation.

b) Regulatory recommendations and a Roadmap up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald network to Natura 2000

Technical

c) Reviewing, assessing and proposing MD Emerald sites in order to approach the EU Nature Directives standards and reply to the insufficiency results during the last biogeographical seminars, providing knowledge on the habitats and species listed in the Birds and Habitats Directives.

d) Knowledge repository Hub including a "Living" library and a "pool" of National/European experts setting the basis for enhancing efforts of cooperation with the EU.

Operational

e) Improve local capacities on criteria-based assessments, appropriate site management, monitoring and reporting requirements with the development of a ready to use set of technical guidelines, action plans, monitoring and reporting tools.

f) Feasibility tool for Emerald to Natura 2000 transformation, based on two pilot examples (a strong & a weak case in terms of conservation level). The feasibility study together with the proposed Roadmap and the project technical outputs will comprise a decision and technical framework for future steps.

LIFE-RENATA is expected to improve the competence of relevant stakeholders and authorities by providing: 1 In depth understanding of EU Habitat Directives, 2 Ready to use methods, tools and materials for monitoring and reporting 3 A Knowledge Repository Hub and a GIS database and 4 Improved knowledge and a profound understanding of the Natura 2000 species and habitats' protection in the existing Emerald sites.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS

Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.

Number	Role	Short name	Legal name	Country	PIC
1	COO	LEVER	LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTIKHS ANONIMH ETERIA	EL	928581583
2	BEN	ICAS	INTREPRINDEREA DE STAT INSTITUTUL DE CERCETARI SI AMENAJARI SILVICE	MD	932605822
3	BEN	EKBY	MOUSEIO GOULANDRI FYSIKIS ISTORIAS	EL	988990079
4	BEN	kartECO	KARTERIS APOSTOLOS KARTERIS MARIN OE	EL	962334479
5	BEN	EcoContact	ASOCIATIA OBSTEASCA ECOCONTACT	MD	923380249
6	AP	MoE-MD	Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova	MD	881285741

LIST OF WORK PACKAGES

Work packages						
Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.						
Work Package No	Work Package name	Lead Beneficiary	Effort (Person-Months)	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables
WP1	Project management and coordination	1 - LEVER	37.00	1	24	D1.1 – 1st Periodic progress report D1.2 – Final progress report
WP2	Institutional and legal recommendations of the Emerald Network towards Natura 2000	5 - EcoContact	43.00	1	20	D2.1 – Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD D2.2 – Roadmap (revised to the existing one) to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD D2.3 – Training report on legal aspects and fundamental principles of the EU Directives
WP3	Emerald site review and identification of advances to Natura 2000	4 - kartECO	67.00	1	20	D3.1 – Overview of Republic of Moldova Emerald sites and support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the EU Nature criteria and Bern Convention D3.2 – Revised proposals to existing Emerald Sites D3.3 – Training report on technical aspects related to EU Nature Directives D3.4 – Knowledge Repository Hub D3.5 – GIS database
WP4	Support for operational advances towards EU Habitat and Bird Directives implementation	3 - EKBY	49.00	2	21	D4.1 – Report on the method and results of the criteria-based prioritization of sites, species, and habitats D4.2 – Guidelines i.for the preparation of

Work packages

Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.

Work Package No	Work Package name	Lead Beneficiary	Effort (Person-Months)	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables
						action plans for the prioritized habitat types and species of Community interest and ii. for Emerald/Natura 2000 site appropriate management including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts. D4.3 – Supporting material on EU Habitat and Bird Directives monitoring and reporting requirements D4.4 – Training report on EU Habitats and Birds Directives' requirements
WP5	Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results	1 - LEVER	33.00	17	24	D5.1 – After-LIFE RENATA Sustainability Plan D5.2 – Replication and Exploitation Plan D5.3 – Transformation feasibility assessment
WP6	Dissemination and communication	1 - LEVER	27.00	1	24	D6.1 – LIFE RENATA Dissemination and communication
WP7	Monitoring and evaluation	1 - LEVER	24.00	1	24	D7.1 – Monitoring and evaluation reporting

Work package WP1 – Project management and coordination

Work Package Number	WP1	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Work Package Name	Project management and coordination		
Start Month	1	End Month	24

Objectives	
<p>WP1 aims at managing, coordinating and evaluating the technical and financial implementation of LIFE RENATA. The work within WP1 will guarantee the proper coordination and the timely and on-budget implementation of the project, as well as the technical and financial reporting, while favouring an effective collaboration among the beneficiaries, and between the consortium and the LIFE Program bodies. In quantitative terms, the activities of this WP are expected to result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) Management Guide (MG) • One (1) Monitoring Handbook (MHb) • Five (5) project meetings • Two (2) meetings with LIFE Programme bodies • Two (2) Periodic reports 	

Description	
<p>T.1.1 [Project Management] (LEVER, all): LEVER, as the project's coordinator (COO), is responsible for: (i) coordinating and managing the project activities, (ii) performing quality control on the project deliverables and ascertaining the overall progress of the work, (iii) acting as an interface. The management structure (see also section 4.2) includes: (1) Project management by the COO and the other project beneficiaries (BENs); (2) WP Leader(s) and Task Leader(s) and; (3) Project Steering Committee (PSC).</p> <p>1. Project management by COO and BENs: The project's management structure will be organised as follows: A. Project Manager (PM), B. Project scientific manager (PSM), C. Project Communication Manager (CM). The Project Manager (PM) will chair the PSC and will be responsible for the overall management and coordination of the project. The PM will be assisted by the PSM and CM. The Project Scientific Manager (PSM) will be responsible for technical implementation of the project. The Communication Manager (CM) will be responsible for the coordination and evaluation of the results of the Dissemination activities. The CM will ensure the effective dissemination and exploitation of project results and will be in close cooperation with the PM of the BENs. In addition, each partner will nominate one PM and one PSM, not fully seconded to the project, devoted to the successful implementation of the project.</p> <p>2. WP Leader(s) and Task Leader(s): The WP Leader is the partner that will be responsible to co-ordinate the activities in a particular WP. In addition, Task Leader is the beneficiary that will be responsible for a particular task. They will ensure complementarity and interdisciplinarity within WPs and Tasks and organise the flow of information within the Tasks and between partners. WP Leaders provide updates on actions' implementation progress and inform of any deviations on Tasks and deliverables implementation and submission to the COO and PSC.</p> <p>3. Project steering committee (PSC): The PSC will have the overall responsibility for Project management, coordination, communication, and dissemination activities. Each beneficiary and the Associated Partner will be asked to appoint its representatives in the PSC (1 permanent and 1 replacement). The project's PM will chair the PSC. Decision-making will be made by consensus, considering the commitments and obligations towards implementation of the project. The PSC will be responsible for reviewing progress in relation to stated deliverables, handling conflicts, evaluating partners' performance, and organising workshops and project meetings. PSC will be also responsible for the planning and fulfilment of dissemination actions. PSC will be formed at the project's Kick-off meeting (month 1) in Kishinev, Moldova. SC meetings will take place every six (6) months along with the project meetings to assess progress, address major challenges and plan next actions. Additional PSC online meetings may be organised by the PM depending on the project needs. Further, the PSC will define Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria that will be used, to the extent that this is possible, in the public procurement processes.</p> <p>Within T.1.1, a Management Guide (MG) will be created. MG will be prepared by LEVER.</p> <p>T.1.2 [Project Reporting] (LEVER, all)</p> <p>Monthly reports (obligatory according to the former programming period): The WP Leaders shall send monthly activity reports to the CO and the CO to the external monitoring team to briefly present the project's progress.</p> <p>Six-month internal reports (optional): a) Technical reports: to be compiled by WP Leaders, with the contribution of the PPs and shall be sent to the CO and b) Financial reports: All beneficiaries will send 6 months financial reports to the CO.</p> <p>Periodic Progress reports to Contracting Authority: a) Technical reports: to be compiled by CO, with the contribution of</p>	

the WP Leaders. b) Financial statements: All the beneficiaries should send the financial statements to the CO. The CO will check and unify the reports to estimate the total cost of the project until the end of the reporting period.

Continuous Reporting: The CO will be responsible to submit deliverables, report on milestones and any other issue related to the project progress

T1.3 [Project monitoring and evaluation] (LEVER, all)

In order to measure and evaluate the project's achievements a monitoring system will be established. The system should be worked out to keep all the activities, including finances, under control. This will assist the PM and WP leaders with their tasks as project progresses, as well as provide early warnings of eventual problems and difficulties. A monitoring handbook (M2) will be prepared by the COO and provided to all BENs. The handbook will include appropriate forms for the monitoring of the followings:

1. Project's Management Handbook: Tasks, responsibilities and timetable
2. Project's monitoring Handbook : milestones, expected results, progress indicators, budget per cost category and PP.
3. Deliverables: The deliverables will be monitor in relation with the involved partners and the steps that have to be completed in order to be conducted. Project's monitoring will be based on handbook's forms. The WP Leaders will complete and send the forms to the CO within six months reports (described in action T1.2). The PM will elaborate the forms and present the conclusions to the PSC in order to evaluate the project's progress and take decisions. The conclusions and decisions of the monitoring will be reported in the Progress, Mid-term and Final reports. The project's monitoring will run in parallel with projects management and is an internal activity for the project.

Work package WP2 – Institutional and legal recommendations of the Emerald Network towards Natura 2000

Work Package Number	WP2	Lead Beneficiary	5 - EcoContact
Work Package Name	Institutional and legal recommendations of the Emerald Network towards Natura 2000		
Start Month	1	End Month	20

Objectives

The objectives of WP2 are:

- Identify institutional and legislative baseline findings, barriers and risks on Emerald network establishment, including site management and monitoring in MD
- Develop recommendations on Institutional and legislative level towards the EU Nature Directives in MD
- Propose best practices that can be applied in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD
- Develop a roadmap to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD (revised to the anticipated by mid-2024)
- Capacity building and competence enhancement of National authorities and relevant stakeholders

The Tasks of WP2 are expected to result in:

- One (1) report on institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD
- One (1) Roadmap (updated to existing) to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD
- Two (2) Consultation meetings
- One (1) training event on legal aspects and fundamental principles of the EU Directives

Description

T.2.1 [Institutional and legislative baseline findings, barriers and risks on Emerald network establishment, including site management and monitoring in MD] (EcoContact, ICAS, EKBY, kartECO, MoE-MD)

T.2.1 will support the MD beneficiaries by preparing a preliminary legal and Institutional baseline study that will identify possible governance barriers and risks in the

following horizontal technical and operational components: 1) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site designation and establishment, 2) Emerald network/potential

Natura 2000 site ecological criteria fulfilment and correspondence to EU Nature Directives, 3) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site management e.g. Action

Plans (APs)/Management Plans (MPs), 4) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site monitoring and reporting and 5)

Introducing in the MD new policy trends such as ecological coherence of the network and ecological corridors and links with restoration (EU Nature Restoration Plan). In the beginning of the project, all related stakeholders in the MD will be mapped by EcoContact and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will be prepared by kartECO. The SEP will be designed and implemented taking into consideration gender equality and accessibility issues. EcoContact will list and analyse all the MD International agreements on biodiversity, primary and secondary legislation provisions and Emerald reference docs10 and together with EKBY-GR and kartECO) identify correspondence/gaps to the five horizontal areas described above with emphasis to the EU Habitats and Birds Directives. Legal aspects and the institutional framework on site identification and designation, site management, monitoring and reporting in MD will be presented in an internal meeting by the MD partners. EKBY and kartECO will identify the EU Nature Directives correspondence level that is currently achieved. Regarding APs and MPs the AP/MP institutional framework and planning, approval procedures and the monitoring framework will be also investigated. Questionnaires will be used to receive feedback on aspects regarding APs/MPs institutional framework and planning efficiency, needs, experts' and consultants' competences, monitoring framework and databases, MPs effectiveness, identified framework of conservation objectives, review mechanisms, etc. Last, the National Emerald network designation history (Phase I, II and III, sufficiency index % per biogeographical areas) as per the official reported Emerald Barometer11, will be outlined by the MD partners. The baseline findings will also consider updates and planned steps that will be presented by the MoE-MD such as prepared by not completed legislative changes, Emerald boundary changes e.tc. Following the internal meeting, a 1st Consultation meeting with representatives from national and local relevant authorities, key biodiversity experts, protected area managers, NGOs etc. will be organized by ICAS (up to M6). The objectives of the 1st Consultation meeting will be the following: a) to disseminate the draft baseline findings, barriers and risks. b) to share existing experiences, lessons learnt and strong and weak points from existing management of Emerald sites. c) to identify training needs etc. During this meeting the team will invite speakers to present, results and challenges met and discuss potential links and synergies with current initiatives such as 1. World Bank-led activities under EU4Environment Program sub-component 4.1: Support to protect biodiversity and natural ecosystems (Emerald network) that aim to advance the establishment of the Emerald Network and management of the Emerald Sites in the Eastern Partner countries (<https://www.eu4environment.org/events/awareness-raising-event-on-prospects-for-the-emerald-network-development-in-moldova-policy-and-legal-aspects/>). EcoContact and kartECO, can transfer know-how and experience with challenges met and resolved, since they are actually the Project leaders on the mentioned WB activity in MD and Armenia, respectively. The WB expert team will be also invited to express its experience on Emeralds in the broad area, 2. Austrian Development Agency financing project "Improving governance of protected areas in Moldova through institutional development, capacity development and habitat restoration", 2023-2027 and 3. GEF financing the project "Conservation and sustainable management of wetlands with focus on high-nature value areas in the Prut River basin", UNDP. The identification of legal and institutional barriers, risks, gaps, capacity needs and SWOT analyses prepared by EcoContact and kartECO will provide the framework to meet the EU Nature Directives. Complementary to the internal and consultation meetings, feedback will be collected by on-line questionnaires designed by kartECO and executed in person to person interviews carried out by EcoContact. Questionnaires will be distributed after formal invitation to officers and representatives of Ministry of Environment, Moldsilva Agency, ICAS officers, and other national authorities involved in Emerald/Protected Areas. Great importance -that will be strictly outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) prepared by kartECO - will be given so the participation in the questionnaire is gender balanced. Thus, T.2.1 is expected to provide as output a concise assessment on the baseline situation, presenting also possible gaps in MD policies and governance on the five horizontal technical and operational components. Such aspects may be setting

specific conservation objectives for current sites, compliance with management and monitoring requirements, evaluation of staff's expertise on using Natura 2000

protocols (SDF fields) and new technologies like GIS, WebGIS, RS, Management Plans framework gaps, etc.

T.2.2 [Recommendations and best practices on Institutional and legislative level in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD] (ICAS, EKBY, kartECO, EcoContact, MoE-MD)

Based on the analysis and questionnaire results of T2.1, well-prioritized recommendations, and best practices focusing on the most critical issues will be outlined in

T.2.2 by ICAS with the contribution of EcoContact, EKBY and kartECO. Specific improvements and solutions will be proposed to be carried out in the upcoming years

planning cycle i.e. 2030. Specifically, a SWOT analysis will be prepared as T.2.2 output that will help identify the critical reform aspects. Upon these, a set of recommendations will

be developed tailored to the MD state, such as main principles, key steps, preconditions and recommendations for designation and transformation from Emerald to

Natura 2000. Recommendations on the governance framework of site management and monitoring/reporting of Emerald sites/potential Nature 2000 will be also

prepared by ICAS-MD and EcoContact, with the assistance of the International partners EKBY-GR, kartECO. A point system will be introduced to express priority tasks

and directions. The formulation of the proposals will consider also MD's international/EU/National obligations, e.g., fulfilling the strategic goals of the UN CBD

Biodiversity Conference (COP 15). A national governance model that corresponds well to Natura 2000 network and EU Nature and Environmental protection Directives

that could be adopted as a model by the MD and will be presented to the MD key stakeholders in T2.4, is the following.

Table 1: Example of NATURA 2000 Governance and action plans (Greece)

Close to the WP completion, a 2nd Consultation meeting with representatives from relevant national and local authorities, key biodiversity experts, protected area

managers, NGOs etc. will be organized by ICAS-MD. The meeting objectives will include a) exchange legal recommendations, best practices and good examples on

management and monitoring on Natura 2000 (also from other accession countries i.e., Armenia), and b) discuss, exchange, propose key axis and context of the

roadmap for legal and institutional reforms etc. Best practices and good examples on management and monitoring on Natura 2000 will be presented by EKBY,

including the findings of the on-going multimillion LIFE project (2018-2025) with a total budget of €17 million, LIFE IP4 in Greece.

T.2.3 [Roadmap to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD] (kartECO, ICAS, EcoContact, MoE-MD)

Based on the analysis results of T2.1 and T2.2, a Roadmap (revised to the anticipated) will be prepared, discussed in the 2nd Consultation meeting and eventually agreed by the MoE-MD. The Roadmap will be prepared by kartECO and EcoContact will be responsible to update from the legal, institutional and management point of view. The anticipated WB Roadmap will be a dynamic framework up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD, supportive to the National Biodiversity Action Plan of MD (Moldova is currently developing its new Strategy on Biodiversity), in line to the NAP (National Action Plan for Emerald site advances – currently under review) and in alignment with EU agreements such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 (<https://rm.coe.int/tpvs21e-2022-strategic-plan-8th-draft/1680a8bea8>) and post-2020 Work Plan for the Network (<https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-of-the-2011-2020-emerald-network-workplan-and-proposal-of-a/1680a040a9>) (corresponding to the global biodiversity framework document for 2030 (CBD) targets. The mission and priorities of the Roadmap should be initially agreed by the National authorities, in a specific viable midterm (2026-2027) and final timeline (up to 2030) with specific indicators such as the number of new active APs/MPs. Finally, a list of measures per action will be proposed in order to achieve the established targets, possibly by following the three-dimensional process for achieving a fully operational Emerald Network (according to the report of the 36th Standing Committee, <https://rm.coe.int/16807464ae>) i.e., Actions for identification and designation, actions for protection and management, actions for communication-public awareness).

The creation of a new Roadmap under RENATA could be considered as counterproductive from a policy agenda and implementation point of view. Thus the RENATA Roadmap will update and complement the WB Roadmap (anticipated to be finalised before mid-2024) with milestones and timeline for the actual transitioning from Emerald to Natura 2000, namely practical transfer of the information, fulfilment of the requirements in relation to designation of Natura 2000 sites and preparation of the necessary documentation to the EC at the time of accession etc.

T.2.4 [Training to enhance the capacities of competent authorities and relevant stakeholders] (EcoContact, all)

One session/seminar will be organized in the premises of the ICAS for managing or protecting the Emerald sites in MD (together with the 1st Consultation meeting, up



to M6) with participation of key stakeholders such as biodiversity experts, site managers, officers from governmental bodies, non-governmental community, business, etc. The training event will be dedicated to Governance-Policy-Institutional setup on Emerald/transforming to Natura 2000, MPs and EU best practices. It will be a 1-day session in RO/EN and will cover the following topics: 1. Birds and Habitats Directive and EU new trends -A review; 2. Governance-Policy-Institutional setup for Emerald/transforming to Natura 2000 in MD. The training session will present the legal aspects and fundamental principles of the EU Directives articles. Also, a good governance example from Greece will be presented by the international team. EcoContact will be responsible to organise the training event and all team partner representatives and officers will be participating either as audience or as tutors. A final report will include all supporting documentation (topics, agenda, invitations, list of participants, trainings, etc.). Great importance, that will be strictly outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) prepared by kartECO, will be given so the participation in the event is gender balanced.

Work package WP3 – Emerald site review and identification of advances to Natura 2000

Work Package Number	WP3	Lead Beneficiary	4 - kartECO
Work Package Name	Emerald site review and identification of advances to Natura 2000		
Start Month	1	End Month	20

Objectives	
The objectives of this Work Package (WP) are:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Republic of Moldova (MD) Emerald sites and provide support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the EU Nature Directives criteria • Revise proposals to existing Emerald Sites and updates – addressing insufficiencies and identifying ecological criteria such as conservation objectives and measures under the EU Nature Directives • Capacity building and competence enhancement • Improve information and knowledge sharing using new technologies 	
The Tasks of WP3 are expected to result in:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview (report) of Republic of Moldova Emerald sites and support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the Bern Convention and EU Nature criteria (RO/EN) and the respective databases with Excel, Jpeg, shp, kmz, files • A report of revised proposals to existing Emerald Sites and updates (RO/EN) and the respective databases with Excel, Jpeg, shp, kmz, files • A training event to enhance the capacities of competent authorities and relevant stakeholders • A Knowledge Repository Hub (KRH), having a «Living» library and a pool of National / European experts • A GIS database containing the final set of .shp files 	

Description	
T.3.1 [Overview of Republic of Moldova Emerald sites and support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the EU Nature criteria and Bern Convention] (ICAS-MD, LEVER, EKBY, kartECO, MoE-MD)	
T.3.1 objective is to provide a technical review and assessment of the most updated version (even if under modification) of the Emerald sites in Republic of Moldova (MD)14. The Republic of Moldova has 61 Adopted sites, covering an area of 2,744.6 km ² (Land area coverage (%)=8.1, including 0% coastal/marine coverage). The online database regarding Emerald sites and Barometer for MD has not been updated, since 2016-2017. Thus, a gap is encountered between national coverage of all sites in the database used for Phase I and the national coverage of Adopted Emerald Network sites for Phase II.	
Initially, a review of the Emerald Network sites assessed during the biogeographical seminars15 will be necessary. Regarding sufficiency index (Emerald establishment	



phase - Phase II), according to the Emerald Barometer16, the MD participated in two Emerald Network sufficiency assessment rounds (5 seminars) from 2015-201917 .

Based on those assessments it ended up to a level of 24,1%, meaning that expertise assistance and effort to increase and complete the network soon is imperative,

although MD has shown significant progress in comparison to other countries. According to the most recent assessment, out of 312 habitats and species, 134 were

evaluated as insufficiently protected (only 7 were evaluated as Major unsuccessfully protected; and the rest as Moderate and Minor insufficiently protected), meaning

that Republic of Moldova fully completed Phase II18, according to the consolidated sufficiency conclusions database. For example, for 22 habitat types (out of the 73)

the assessment showed" moderate insufficiently protected (IN MOD)" which according to the description, means that one or more additional sites (or extensions of sites) must be proposed, to achieve a sufficient coverage of the Emerald network in MD. Similar enhancements of the Emerald sites are required for 38 species (out of

239) Local and experienced biodiversity experts in habitat types and per species group (plants, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, fish, mammals, birds) will be

subcontracted by ICAS-MD in order to be engaged and provide outputs in T.3.1 and T.3.2. Biodiversity experts will be strongly supported by the Greek partners to

successfully implement an assessment of the baseline situation, improve their knowledge and mainstreaming with EU Directives, as well as their capacity for EU

Directive implementation. ICAS-MD with the assistance of the subcontracting team of experts and kartECO, will initially record and map every available information for

all Emerald sites in MD. This information includes existing boundaries (shp), habitat mapping within sites -if any-, boundary delineation logic, quality and specifications

of site SDFs, target species presented, ecological criteria addressed or not and in what depth, justifications for any modification, overlap with other uses, conflict zones,

etc. Regarding the correspondence with EU Nature Directives aspects, the local biodiversity experts will be asked to present to the respective Working Group usual

practices and examples in MD, such as site identification and designation, site management, monitoring and reporting. This will help the international experts of EKBYGR

and kartECO to identify the level of correspondence with EU Nature Directives in matters such as Field protocols completeness, SDFs existence and format, SDF

fields and missing SDF info, criteria used (i.e., Annex III of the Habitats Directive for special areas of conservation, IBA criteria or similarly robust ornithological criteria

for special protection areas under the Birds Directive), conservation objectives, monitoring and reporting plan. The above will then result in outlining the identified gaps in MD towards the implementation of the EU Habitat Directives. During T.3.1, emphasis will be given on which conservation criteria and steps are already followed per

existing Emerald site. For example, are the natural values for which the area is protected identified with respective conservation objectives and measures to reach

them, (or is there any mechanism established for their timely identification)? The designation instrument should also describe the mechanism through which the

conservation measures will be regularly reviewed on the basis of science, taking into account their effectiveness and the progress achieved. Is there such

mechanism?. The above subtask will help identify gaps, needs, possible insufficiencies and update necessities towards implementing the EU Habitat Directives by the

existing framework in MD. In T.3.1 the team will also come in communication and collect updated -if any- information by other initiatives (such as World Bank-led

activities) It should be noted that the Ministry of Environment-MD will serve in informing the team for any other initiative. Also, partner EcoContact-MD is also leading

as a consulting association the relevant initiatives in MD, thus will provide necessary resources and material if they are public.

Overall T.3.1 output will provide to key stakeholder representatives and officers, improved knowledge on the presence or not of the habitats and species listed in the

Birds and Habitats Directive and whether further research is needed and towards which direction. This will be used as input to T.3.2 to support on improving sufficiency

index and also match as possible the corresponding criteria and specifications under the EU Nature19.

T.3.2 [Revised proposals to existing Emerald Sites and updates – addressing insufficiencies and identifying designation criteria such as conservation

objectives and measures under the EU Nature Directives] (ICAS, LEVER, EKBY, kartECO, MoE-MD):

T.3.2 will provide further analysis based on the T3.1 output to help confront needs, possible insufficiencies, and update necessities to approach EU Nature Directives and at the same time cover possible update gaps (data becoming too obsolete) in the database. The above information received from T.3.1 will be to improve sufficiency % and match as possible the corresponding criteria/specifications of the EU Nature Directives²⁰ by identifying new or modifying/expanding existing Emerald areas boundaries. Thus, for each Emerald site in MD a supportive two-step broad process will be followed. This two-step approach will involve: 1. Site Boundary review and modifications and habitat mapping (if any), and 2. SDF review and modifications. During this task the project team will be in close collaboration with local biodiversity experts to update and improve the Emerald sites database (i.e., improve boundary delineation, update SDFs, integrate relevant research priorities in the Roadmap) The process will need many Working Group meetings and reviews to be finalized. The local biodiversity experts will review/modify/improve, under the directions of EKBY-GR, the SDF's per Emerald site in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directives to identify research priorities on the actual presence of the species and habitat types, conduct targeted field visits in selected sites, and set site-specific conservation objectives where feasible. Any type of modification should take strongly into account the official EU justification recommendations²¹. In addition, the GIS experts of the team will collect, review, and prepare along with the local biodiversity experts help, a complete dataset of shp files on National basis. This will include, for each Emerald site, a set of other layers e.g., administrative boundaries, designated Protected areas, Forest Fund, etc., in order to identify possible correction needs (e.g., Boundary overlap alignment between Emerald site and overlapping designated protected area such as in MD0000004 that is situated in frame/overlapping with Natural Reserve Codrii²²). In case any designated protected areas and/or Forest Fund shp file is missing, it will be digitized from existing files eg.raster or map files etc. A complete updated set will be ready to be used and possible boundary gaps will be identified and corrected in a next stage. Also, a set of descriptive statistics will be retrieved providing information, for example, on how many Emerald sites are completely or partly under a constitutional protected controlled area, overlapping areas etc. Furthermore, a shp layer with the boundaries of the existing active MPs will be prepared on National basis, in order to assess how many Emerald sites are completely or partly under active MP, overlap %, etc. Site boundaries depending on the protective status may either remain, expand and/or additionally proposed (new area). In the remaining or expanding ones the local team experts together with the GIS experts will attempt to correct line errors of the boundaries of the existing sites and possibly delineate new or extend/modify existing Emerald sites. During boundaries correction, a set of EU best practices and rules on Natura 2000 boundaries will be also provided by kartECO to ensure Buffer Zone for rivers, the use of physical/ natural boundaries, exclude human related activities such as city planning borders, understand what the "critical elements" in the status of a given site are, using physical boundaries such as a stream in order every site area to be reasonably delineated and also avoid future land use conflicts, as experienced in the past in EU with many Natura 2000 sites. During boundaries mapping satellite and orthophotos from openly available data sources (Google Earth and Bing data) will be used. It is anticipated that one round of discussions with key stakeholders (during the 2nd Consultation meeting organized by ICAS-MD in T2.2) will be required for reviewing the site proposal output. The proposal will be issued in two stages, one draft version for review by key stakeholders and a final one. Each draft and final deliverable will be accompanied with jpeg, shp and kml files of all sites and Excel tables with XY coordinates with the Names, Codes and Area (in Hectares) of each site. T.3.2 output deliverable will -among other- also present general statistics (e.g., % of country area) and changes (e.g., area increase) after the site revision. This will feed the Roadmap (D2.3) targets. T.3.2 will support the update of the Emerald Network database for MD, currently outdated (it is since 2017) and help re-estimate the Emerald Barometer indicator values per Phase I, II and III. Thus, at the project completion the MD National Authorities will have an updated picture about advancements towards EU biodiversity protection. Regarding sufficiency index (Emerald phase II establishment phase), according to the Emerald Barometer²²,

ICAS-MD and local biodiversity experts will recheck for each site the list of Res 4 habitats and Res 6 species in order to address the insufficiencies assessed during the biogeographical seminars (Phase II). Thus, during T.3.2 it will be necessary to reassess previous sufficiency assessments and carry out additional work²³. The results

will be a significant tool for the Ministry to report back when a new set of bio-geographical seminars will be organised. T.3.3 [Knowledge Repository Hub and GIS database] (kartECO, LEVER, EcoContact)

In T.3.3 a Knowledge Repository Hub (KRH) will be designed. The KRH will have with two functions. The first function will be a «Living» library and the second function

a pool of National / European experts. kartECO-GR with the assistance of EcoContact-MD and following the agreement of the Ministry, will design the “Living”

library architecture and develop a knowledge inventory that could be uploaded in the project web portal and ideally in the web page of the Office for the Implementation of the Environmental Projects. At this point there is no such knowledge sharing tool in MD. The “Living” library knowledge inventory portal will be prepared with the contribution of all partner experts and may include:

- EU Emerald portal recommendations documents and other specific to MD information from the EU Emerald portal related to Emerald/Natura 2000. (The mentioned portal (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/documents1>) seems difficult to be followed by the respective Emerald competent parties).

- A literature analysis on MD EU Emerald/Nature Directive/Natura 2000 specifications and target species.

- Research findings and Initiatives results if relevant.

- Project results such as manuals, tables, lists and guidelines in local language and in EN

- Project training document, ppts etc

The knowledge material will be in pdfs or other format and in RO and/or EN.

Regarding the second function, a pool of national and international scientists of different thematic areas such as environmental biodiversity, Emerald/Protected areas

management, conservation management, policy-legal, Remote Sensing, biodiversity recovery in case of extreme events (e.g., catastrophic fires), will be prepared. A

tentative list of experts (name, contact info, area of expertise, etc.) will be presented in the output. This may also be used to establish an “Expert panel” of National/European experts that will be kindly invited to participate. This list of experts can be shared also with other related projects of other Trans-European Nature

areas. GDPR and privacy related issues will be thoroughly taken under consideration and applied, where necessary.

The KRH will be a platform for information and knowledge sharing among key audiences to help get familiar and align with the EU standards and legislation. It will

boost project’s sustainability and new initiatives exploration since the KRH will allow communication among national and international experts and knowledge sharing.

The KRH will enhance transparency in Emerald site project results and decisions, increase public awareness and participation and thus, allow the MD to get closer to

EU practices. It will also assist the Ministry to uptake in the future support and management measures that are scientifically proven and tested. The KRH structure will

be dynamic and expandable to future additional functions e.g., Web-GIS, Technological-Data platforms. In terms of sustainability, it will be maintained and, in the

future, could be included in a broader National biodiversity Hub. The GIS database will include a final dataset of the project activities. The proposed geodatabase will

be structured as a Geographic Database (GDB) file, encompassing a diverse array of geographical and non-geographical data elements, essential for the effective

management and monitoring of the Emerald Network/Natura 2000 in the Republic of Moldova (MD). This comprehensive collection will be categorized into the following

data types (according to data availability):

(a) Shapefiles: Geographical data that are inherently spatial in nature will be represented as shapefiles. These will include: Site boundaries represented as polygon

shapefiles, habitat distributions, often depicted as polygon shapefiles, species distribution maps, represented as point or polygon shapefiles depending on the need for precision.

(b) Points: Certain geospatial data, typically species occurrences or specific geographical landmarks, will be recorded as point data. Examples include: Spatial

representations of species distributions, precise locations of infrastructure elements such as visitor centers and trails.

(c) Tables: Non-geographical data, such as tabular records, will be organized as tables. These tables will encompass a wide range of information, including –

indicative:-Site information such as names, unique IDs, categories, and descriptions. Conservation objectives, management goals, and monitoring protocols. Legal and regulatory information, such as directives, regulations, and designations. Resource and infrastructure details, such as funding sources and personnel allocations. Historical data and trends, covering land use and species records. Collaborative data-sharing metadata, capturing contributor information and update history. Metadata and documentation, detailing data sources, methodologies, and quality information. The GIS database will follow the Standard Data Form (SDF) as described by the Natura 2000 data flow document (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32011D0484>). The Standard Data Form (SDF) defines the data to be provided by the Member States to the Commission. The first version of the SDF was published in 1997; the revised version was published in Official Journal on 30 July 2011. The revision process did also consider the standardisation process carried out in the context of the revision of the reporting sheets for the Habitats Directive Article 17 reporting and the Birds Directive Article 12 reporting as well as INSPIRE data specifications. The SDF includes the following information categories²⁴: i. Site identification; ii. Site location; iii. Ecological information (Habitat types present on the site and site assessment for them; Species covered by the Birds and Habitats Directives; Other important species of flora and fauna); v. Site description (General character, importance, ownership, documentation; Impacts and activities with effect on the site); vi. Site protection status; vii. Site management; viii. Maps.

T.3.4 [Training to enhance the capacities of competent authorities and relevant stakeholders] (EcoContact, LEVER, ICAS, EKBY, kartECO, MoE-MD)

One session/seminar will be organized together with the 2nd Consultation meeting (M12) in the premises of ICAS. This will include participation of key stakeholders related to WP3 outputs such as biodiversity experts, site managers, officers from governmental bodies, non-governmental community, business, etc. The training event will be dedicated to technical aspects related to EU Nature Directives. It will be a 1-day session in RO/EN and will cover the following topics (indicative): 1. Introduction to EU Nature Directives criteria and specifications; 2. Identification of site-specific conservation objectives according to the Natura 2000 EU standard. EcoContact will be responsible to organise the training event and all team partner representatives and officers will be participating either as audience or as tutors. A final report will include all supporting documentation (topics, agenda, invitations, list of participants, trainings, etc.). Great importance -that will be strictly outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) prepared by kartECO will be given so the participation in the event is gender balanced.

Work package WP4 – Support for operational advances towards EU Habitat and Bird Directives implementation

Work Package Number	WP4	Lead Beneficiary	3 - EKBY
Work Package Name	Support for operational advances towards EU Habitat and Bird Directives implementation		
Start Month	2	End Month	21

Objectives
The objectives of this Work Package (WP) are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To propose and apply a criteria-based assessment, to prioritize habitat types and species in need for action, in the Emerald/Natura sites • To provide guidelines for the preparation of action plans for the prioritized habitat types and species of Community interest • To provide guidelines for Emerald/Natura 2000 site appropriate management including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts • To support and enhance Emerald sites/Natura 2000 monitoring and reporting

- To enhance the capacity of the competent authorities, experts and other relevant stakeholders on all the above, through training

The expected results of WP3 are:

- A report on the method and results of the criteria-based prioritization of sites, species, and habitats
- Guidelines for the preparation of action plans for the prioritized habitat types and species of Community interest
- Guidelines for Emerald/Natura 2000 site appropriate management including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts
- Supporting material on EU Habitat and Bird Directives monitoring and reporting requirements
- A training event to enhance the capacities of competent authorities and relevant stakeholders

Description

Task 4.1 [Assessments for prioritization of habitat types, species and Emerald/Natura sites] (EKBY, LEVER, ICAS, kartECO, MoE-MD)

At first, Task 4.1 will set criteria for the assessment / prioritization of habitat types and of species as those are recorded in SDFs (the updated version of WP3 will be

used) The criteria will cover attributes such as: distribution pattern, reference of habitat or species in Annex I / II, priority habitat/species, conservation degree, pressures/threats. Specifically, for birds, additional criteria such as migration species, negative population trends etc. will be considered. Next, a composite

assessment/prioritization will follow per Emerald/Natura site based on assessment / prioritization results for habitat types and species as well as on pressures/threats

recorded per site. The selection of criteria, procedure and outcomes will be finalized in cooperation and discussions with the local experts and National authorities. This

task will conclude in lists of habitat types, species and sites in need of action, ranked in three levels of priority: high, medium, low. EKBY will be responsible to implement T.4.1 with the involvement of LEVER, kartECO, ICAS, MoE-MD and the local biodiversity experts who will collaborate with EKBY for the selection of the prioritization criteria and ranking. kartECO will provide technical support for the assessment of habitat type and species data.

Task 4.2 [Guidelines for the preparation of action plans and appropriate management, including suggestions for codes and conducts] (EKBY, LEVER, ICAS,

EcoContact, MoE-MD) The guidelines for the preparation of action plans will be based on relative EU standards and principles, prioritized habitat types and species (T.4.1), the results of the baseline situation (WP2) and consultation with the local experts. Guidelines for the preparation of the action plan will focus on the structural contexts and relevant

guidance. The Guidelines will include specifications on how to draft and elaborate such a plan, which will include (indicatively): a) Information about the habitat type /

species, such as the description of ecological requirements of habitat types and species, their protection status and conservation condition, pressures and threats,

assessment of conservation actions and measures applied so far (if any), b) objectives of the action plan, based on the above and c) main core of actions for habitat

types and species, including needs and specific measures for the protection and conservation of habitat types / species, monitoring program to assess the success of

the implementation of measures. The guidelines for appropriate management of Emerald/Natura 2000 sites will be based on the requirements of Article 6 of the

Habitats Directive, relevant EC guidance and best practices from EU member states. Guidelines will focus on how to draft a management plan –using the management

plan structure that is under development in MD by a WB led program-, in a particular site that responds to the protection, conservation or even restoration needs of

habitat types and species for which the site has been designated. It should further aim at the halting or mitigation of pressures and threats, and avoidance of damaging

activities. The guidance document will provide insights in different axis of management plans, including: a) the background of the appropriate management of

Emerald/Natura 2000 sites, such as the basic principles and the needs, the legal, strategic and governance framework at national and European level, the procedures

from planning to management updates; b) the prerequisites for successful management planning and implementation such as interdisciplinarity, participatory

processes and social acceptance, prioritization, transparency etc. c) the context of the management plans (i.e. objectives, appropriate management measures required to achieve the objectives, detailed planning of the implementation of the measures and monitoring program of its effectiveness), d) best practices and suggestions of codes of conducts, in line with the appropriate management of protected areas. Apart from the above, the management plans will also take into considerations of any other important feature of the site, which adds to the site's character and environmental values, i.e., wilderness. The guidelines will support and provide input for the drafting of national specifications for the Emerald/Natura 2000 sites management plans, which will be a useful management tool for all those involved in the management of protected areas.

EKBY will be responsible to implement T.4.2 with the involvement of EcoContact that will provide details on the Emerald/Protected areas management plan structures (that is under development in MD by a WB led program already mentioned). Regarding the WB project output, T2.4 will build on what is developed by the WB project, with regards to site management plan -anticipated to be an initial guideline/template based on how to develop an Emerald site management plan and use it as a replication of conservation efforts nationwide-. RENATA will go steps further by providing specific practical guidelines and focus on guidance on appropriate management used by site managers, (which is out of the scope of the WB project).

Also, ICAS will give during guideline preparation and revision discussions the localized character, by highlighting national expertise capacities and other possible technical difficulties that may arise during action plan implementation. The project team shall develop -as much as possible- guidelines adopted to MD capabilities. Finally, the MoE-MD will provide inputs for the national frameworks and conditions and review/enhance the guidelines.

Task 4.3 [Support and enhancement of Emerald / Natura 2000 sites monitoring and reporting] (EKBY, LEVER, ICAS, MoE-MD)

The support and enhancement of Emerald / Natura 2000 sites monitoring and reporting will be achieved through the drafting of supporting material on EU Habitat and

Bird Directives requirements (e.g. update and submission of the national Natura 2000 database, reporting under Art. 17 and 12 of the Nature Directives) and based on relevant EC reference documents. Supporting material will include (indicatively): a) an overview of the monitoring and reporting requirements in the context of the

Nature Directives; b) guidance for the preparation of appropriate monitoring plans in the context of a nationwide biodiversity monitoring system (with emphasis on the

Emerald / Natura 2000 sites), covering: i) the assessment of the conservation status of habitat types and species, ii) the assessment of management (e.g. to assess if

and how the implemented conservation measures are leading towards reaching conservation objectives for the site, to assess the efficacy of implemented conservation

methods and approaches) and iii) the fulfilment of EU / national reporting obligations (e.g. update of the Emerald/Natura 2000 database, reporting on habitat types and species' conservation status). The guidance document will address various aspects of biodiversity monitoring under the Nature Directives (e.g., monitoring objectives

and targets, data collection methods and protocols, sampling areas, time and frequency, data analysis, interpretation and visualization). WP2 and WP3 will provide

input to this task, such as the current biodiversity monitoring framework (methods and results), the capacities and gaps (including institutional ones); c) guidance for

reporting will cover: i) the update and submission of the Natura 2000 descriptive database and spatial dataset and ii) the drafting and submission of national reports

under Art. 17 of the Habitats Directive and Art. 12 of the Birds Directive. Both are submitted to the EC through the Reportnet Central Data Repository (CDR). Other

relevant reporting requirements (e.g., reports on derogations) will also be considered, depending on the needs and obligations of the country's competent authorities.

The guidance will also include: i) suggestions on suitable monitoring data on habitats and species, to be used for reporting [e.g., data produced in the framework of this

project (WP3) as well as other existing available datasets and databases identified and gathered (WP2)] and ii) advice on the best use of EU reporting tools.

EKBY will be responsible to implement T.4.3 with the involvement of the MoE-MD and relevant division that is responsible for reporting to the EU, ICAS and protected area managers.

T.4.4 [Training to enhance the capacities of competent authorities and relevant stakeholders] (EKBY, all)

A training seminar will be organized by the end of WP4 at EKBY premises addressed to national and local competent authorities, experts/researchers and other relevant stakeholders. The training event is dedicated to EU Habitats and Birds Directives' requirements in regard to management, monitoring and reporting. Representatives from the Greek competent authorities on protected areas and biodiversity, as well as biodiversity experts will be invited to share the Greek experience. It will be a 3-day session in EN, including a field visit to a nearby Natura 2000 site, to share experience with local site managers. The training seminar will focus on the outputs of T.4.1, T.4.2 and T.4.3 and thus, will cover the following topics:

- Prioritization of habitat types and species, in the Emerald/Natura sites.
- Action plans for habitat types and species of Community interest.
- Site management (including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts).
- Monitoring and reporting.

EKBY (with the support of LEVER) will be responsible to organise the training event and all team partner representatives and officers will be participating either as audience or as tutors. A final report will include all supporting documentation (topics, agenda, invitations, list of participants, trainings, etc.). Great importance -that will be strictly outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) prepared by kartECO - will be given so the participation in the event is gender balanced.

Work package WP5 – Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results

Work Package Number	WP5	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Work Package Name	Sustainability, replication and exploitation of project results		
Start Month	17	End Month	24

Objectives	
<p>WP5 aims at assuring the project's (a) long-term sustainability and (b) replication and transfer potential. Towards these, WP5 will involve the development of an effective strategy with activities allowing the continued use and further development of LIFE RENATA outcomes and results at regional governance level. The effective dissemination and communication of the project results after its closure will also be targeted. Concerning replicability and transferability, a concrete plan will be created to support the utilisation of project's outcome by authorities and stakeholders of other emerald sites of Republic of Moldova.</p> <p>The measurable results of WP5 will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) After-LIFE Sustainability Plan. • One (1) Replication and Transfer plan • One (1) transformation feasibility assessment 	

Description	
<p>T.5.1 [After-LIFE Sustainability Plan] (LEVER, all)</p> <p>T.5.1 will secure the sustainability of the project deliverables, the continuation of the communication and dissemination of the project results after its end and the high After-LIFE project exploitation. In particular, for at least 5 years after the completion of the project the following activities are foreseen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Implementing and monitoring by the MD Government and Ministry of Environment the dynamic Roadmap framework initiative (D2.2). ii) Expanding and updating the Knowledge Repository Hub (D3.4) by the administrator of the web page such as: ICAS. iii) GIS database (D3.5) update. iv) Support for Effective Governance through Seminars and Courses to the Governance Authorities Partners. v) Continuous Experts Engagements through Scientific Publications in Scientific Journals and Conferences. vi) Conservation of the Governance and Scientific Communication and Collaboration Networks. 	

The After-LIFE activities described above will be presented in detail and with additions in the After-LIFE Sustainability Plan that will be prepared by LEVER with contributions from all partners at the end of the project (month 24). The plan may include specific considerations for the individual beneficiaries and pilot areas. For this reason, also contributions from all beneficiaries to the plan are necessary, giving emphasis to the feedback provided by the partner authorities.

T.5.2 [Replication and Exploitation Plan] (LEVER, all)

A Replication and exploitation Plan (REP) will be created within the present task. The plan will consolidate the experiences and knowledge gained during the LIFE RENATA implementation into a step-by-step guide that will facilitate the replication of the overall approach employed. LIFE-RENATA overall concept is to better guidance and enhance competencies for establishing a Natura 2000 site management and joint efforts of cooperation among MD and EU. Thus, the project seeks to replicate all effort and deliverables. Specifically, WP2, 3 and 4 results (Guidance, methods, tools, reports) provides a complete framework set that can be replicated and/or further exploited for the Emerald/proposed Natura 2000 in the whole country. Replicable/exploitable project results can be for example the Guidelines for future Action Plans (APs), the Guidelines for Emerald/Natura 2000 planning site Management and the Guidelines for Monitoring and reporting requirements and best practices. In addition, project results, challenges and solutions will be very useful lessons learned on a wider geographical scale as public recommendation docs for Emerald to Natura 2000 transformations cases. Such could be published in the Natura 2000 and Emerald network portal, from which more than 18 Emerald Network countries consult. The Emerald Network Viewer is a useful tool for all stakeholders who have an interest for ecological networks and biodiversity conservation but also for land use planning, policy makers, scientists, and academia. LEVER will act as task leader for coordinating the preparation of REP, with contributions provided by all partners. Further, REP will include guidelines on how to successfully realise this project by defining: (i) Work breakdown structure and time plan, with a detailed definition of the project tasks and their temporal sequence; (ii) Execution and monitoring responsibilities including a profile of who should be in charge for the implementation of each undertaking and the oversight mechanisms/procedures that will ensure smooth project implementation.

T.5.3 [Transformation from Emerald to Natura 2000 – A Pilot demonstration example in MD] (ICAS, LEVER, EKBY, EcoContact)

A transformation feasibility assessment will be developed in T.6.3 for 2 specific Emerald Sites (Plaiul Fagului (MD0000003, surface 5850 ha) and Stepa Bugeacului (MD0000016 – 49610 ha). These sites were selected to represent a “Strong” case, i.e., a protected Emerald area that fulfills most of the Emerald site management requirements and a “Weak” case, i.e., a protected Emerald area with poorly identified conservation objectives, possibly not active MPs, etc. The feasibility study will be prepared by the subcontracting local experts of ICAS with the support EKBY and EcoContact. A field inventory run by the subcontracting local experts (complementary to the SDF information) will be also carried out. The fundamental set of establishing and managing a Natura 2000 site as described and developed in the previous WPs output will be the “reference” line in order to provide a solid picture of the correspondence distance towards the habitat and species protection and EU Nature Directives in the two rational scenarios. T.5.3 output will be an additional project result transferability tool. The feasibility study together with the proposed Roadmap and the project technical output will comprise a full decision and technical framework set for future steps in MD.

Work package WP6 – Dissemination and communication

Work Package Number	WP6	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Work Package Name	Dissemination and communication		
Start Month	1	End Month	24

Objectives
<p>WP6 aims at: (a) effectively disseminating the project's outcomes and developments; (b) promoting the governance-level uptake of the provided methods and tools for Emerald network establishment and management. Towards achieving these objectives, the following activities will take place within WP6: (i) community and media engagement through effective communication channels (e.g., social media) and publicity material, (ii) governance authorities and experts engagement through policy-oriented outreach material and broad diffusion of the project's innovative concepts, tools and achievements in the national and international scientific community, and (iii) networking with other LIFE projects through appropriate collaborative channels (e.g., workshops). Results of WP6 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) project website • One (1) Layman's report • Two (2) e-newsletters • Two (2) infographics • Two (2) social media and social networking sites • One (1) governance-related seminar • Two (2) publications about the project results in scientific journals • Two (2) presentations about the project results in national/international conferences • One (1) European conference • One (1) collaborative network with at least six (6) relevant LIFE projects
Description
<p>T.6.1 [General communication and dissemination of the project] (LEVER, all)</p> <p>The work during this task will lead to the successful general communication and dissemination of the project mainly in Republic of Moldova, contributing to the public awareness raising and to the establishment of engagement at community level. It also aims at establishing good relationships with the local and national media, as they can be effective diffusion channels for the dissemination of the project's information, results, and achievements. In particular, this activity will deliver the public website and social media (Facebook and Instagram) accounts of LIFE RENATA. Both communication tools will be available in English and national languages and will present information on the project's objectives, activities, and outcomes, as well as general information associated with the project topic. Further, a dedicated project page will be introduced on the beneficiaries' websites. Outreach material, including two e-newsletters, two promotional videos and two infographics, will be disseminated through the above communication channels, as well as through media. Additional general public outreach material will include one layman summary that will be also electronically distributed to traditional and online media. The report will inform the general public about the project, also attracting the interest of decision-makers and stakeholders. All outreach material will be produced in English (LEVER) and local languages (RO, EN). LEVER will be responsible for creating and maintaining the project's website and social media accounts, and for delivering Communication Package. For this purpose, a communication manager will be assigned by LEVER to coordinate all communication activities. All partners will disseminate the outreach material to any available network. BENs will contribute to the development of the contents of the communication tools and materials.</p>
<p>T.6.2 [Policy-makers and Experts Engagement] (ICAS, all)</p> <p>Policy makers and experts on biodiversity and natural habitats will be engaged in the projects. All partners have a wide network of relevant stakeholders that will support the project. Along with the activities in T6.1, more stakeholders from GR, MD and EU will be approached and engaged. Also, a key-stakeholder is the Ministry of Environmental Protection in Ukraine and the Rewilding Ukraine which will be actively engaged in the project (see Annex – letter of interest/support), aiming in transferring the project's findings and results in UA as well. Therefore, the present task involves the following activities to engage and involve the stakeholders: (i) Local Seminar: One 1-day seminar will be organized by</p>

ECOCONTACT and ICAS, respectively, with the contribution also from Greek partners. The seminar will be organized towards the end of the project (month 20) and will target to the policy- and decision-makers with the primary purpose to provide knowledge to the authorities, associated with the establishment and management of Emerald network. The training activities will be beneficial for the participants since they will increase their capacity for governance improvement. Besides, training events are also useful for the project itself since they will allow the authorities' engagement in the continuation of the use of the LIFE RENATA outcomes by the trained participants after the project end. 15 participants are expected in the seminar to which the necessary training material will be provided; (ii) Publications and Presentations in national Conferences: Presentations (at least three oral/poster) will be carried out at national scientific conferences of the under-accession countries. Responsible for the papers and presentations' preparation will be ICAS with contributions by EKBY and kartECO.

T.6.3 [Networking with other LIFE Projects] (ICAS, all)

The current task targets sharing of information and good practices between LIFE projects for capacity building and picking-up of new ideas for project improvements and future collaborations mainly between under-accession beneficiaries and other LIFE BENs. In particular, the collaboration aims to identify, assess, and exploit information exchange, synergies and complementarities with other LIFE projects. Especially, the organization of joint events with on-going LIFE projects for NATURA 2000 monitoring and management sites will be considered. Similar/complementary projects with LIFE RENATA are the LIFE projects (On-going multimillion LIFE project (2018-2025) with a total budget of €17 million, LIFE IP4 (<https://edozoume.gr/>) (see letter in Annex). Strongly related to the proposal since it a conservation framework project (implementing the Greek PAF). Networking will start at the beginning of the project and will continue throughout the project lifetime, while the network that will be created in the framework of the project is expected to provide opportunities for future collaborations after its end. Communication will be established with the contact persons of these projects (via e-mails, skype teleconferences to exchange ideas, etc.) and the project will be presented in the networking activities of these projects. Additional information exchange activities of T.6.3 include the organization of one European conference representing the project's closing event to reinforce networking with the consortia of ongoing and completed LIFE and other EU relevant projects, as well as with various stakeholders. The conference will present the results of the project and other solutions that can be used to address emerald sites management and monitoring and build concrete management plans by other LIFE projects. The workshop will take place in Kishinev in M22 and will be organized by ICAS and EcoContact. All partners will be involved and participate.

Work package WP7 – Monitoring and evaluation

Work Package Number	WP7	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Work Package Name	Monitoring and evaluation		
Start Month	1	End Month	24

Objectives	
WP7 aims to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and evaluate the project's legal, technical and operational impacts • Identify, monitor and evaluate other impacts <p>WP7 results are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of Performance Is which will facilitate the monitoring of the project results and expected impacts 	

Description	
T.7.1 [Legal impact monitoring] (LEVER, all):	

LIFE RENATAs' overarching ambition is to facilitate the future implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 in the Republic of Moldova (MD), considering a holistic approach, through recommending reformation of their legal acquis in MD. Within this framework, monitoring and evaluation of the effects of the project -in the legal key component-, will consider the following targeted impacts:

- One Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations output including a SWOT analysis to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in the MD.
- One Roadmap for the MD (revised to the existing one). A dynamic -based on the currently prepared- framework initiative up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD with performance indicators e.g. expected number of new APs.
- >2 legal recommendations such as Law Amendments on the Natura Directive (that in this case, for example, two Laws can be assessed)
- >3 Roadmap performance indicators e.g.. expected number of new APs (anticipated)
- Two Consultation meetings. Indicative participants >25 per meeting.
- One capacity building training event with team partners, key stakeholders representatives and officers, experts, academics etc. Indicative training participants >15

T.7.2 [Technical impact monitoring] (LEVER, all):

Within this framework, monitoring and evaluation of the effects of the project -in the technical key component-, will consider the following targeted impacts:

- Size of proposed identified areas (expanding, modifying or new) in MD as a result of WP3
- Sufficiency Index assessment potential results as a result of WP3
- Potential increase in national coverage % after review and modifications proposed as a result of WP3
- Increase in number of species/increase in size of potential protected areas/% increase of habitats/species identified under Birds and Habitats Directive Anex III in MD as a result of WP3

• A Knowledge repository Hub including a «Living» library with more than 50 references and a pool of more than 50 National / European experts

• An updated GIS database (geodatabase) to provide a centralized repository for all geospatial data related to the Emerald Network project, facilitating informed decision-making, data sharing, analysis, and collaboration among stakeholders. It will serve as a valuable tool for managing, monitoring, and improving the

Emerald Network's establishment and sustainability efforts in MD. Subject to the availability of information, the geodatabase could encompass:

- Site Information (e.g., Site Name, Site ID or Code, Site Category, Site Area etc.)
- Geographical Information (e.g., Geographic Coordinates, Site Boundary Geometry)
- Habitat Data (e.g., Type, Code, Description, Area etc.)
- Species Data (e.g., Name, Code, Description, Abundance/Presence etc.)
- Legal and Regulatory Information (e.g., Relevant Directives and Regulations, Legal Designations and Categories)
- Infrastructure and Resources
- Historical Data and Trends such as Historical Land Use Data and Historical Species Data
- Metadata and Documentation
- Mapping and Visualization

• One capacity building training event with team partners, key stakeholders' representatives and officers, experts, academics etc. Indicative training participants >15

T.7.3 [Operational impact monitoring] (LEVER, all):

Within this framework, monitoring and evaluation of the specific effects of the project -in the operational key component-, will consider the following targeted impacts:

- Three ready to use guiding tools for MD site managers and competent authority officers for future use
- One pilot example (two areas) and % size of expanding the pilot site (if applicable)
- Number of species/size of areas/% increase of habitats/species identified under Birds and Habitats Directive Annex III in the pilot area examples and on National basis (if applicable)
- One participatory meeting. Indicative participants >25 per meeting
- One capacity building training event with team partners, key stakeholders' representatives and officers, experts, academics etc. Indicative training participants >15

T.7.4 [Other Impact] (LEVER, all):

The target of this task is to assess and monitor the performance of LIFE RENATA concerning other impacts not presenting above. Other impacts include the



Awareness raising impacts and socioeconomic impacts. The impact of communication and dissemination activities, awareness raising will be monitored through indicators such as: (a) Number of website visits in total number; (b) Number of public- and stakeholders-oriented outreach material disseminated; (c) Number of relevant projects where collaboration was achieved. Regarding the socio-economic impact the indicators will be used are: (a) Number of authorities with improved governance capacities; (b) Number of stakeholder users of the project outcomes; (c) Number of replication sites adopting the project results.

LEVER will be responsible for monitoring and updating the project impacts with contributions provided by all partners.

STAFF EFFORT

Staff effort per participant

Grant Preparation (Work packages - Effort screen) — Enter the info.

Participant	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7	Total Person-Months
1 - LEVER	20.00	1.00	5.00	4.00	8.00	9.00	8.00	55.00
2 - ICAS	6.00	15.00	21.00	12.00	9.00	5.00	4.00	72.00
3 - EKBY	4.00	9.00	16.00	23.00	7.00	5.00	4.00	68.00
4 - kartECO	4.00	9.00	18.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	50.00
5 - EcoContact	3.00	9.00	7.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	35.00
Total Person-Months	37.00	43.00	67.00	49.00	33.00	27.00	24.00	280.00

LIST OF DELIVERABLES

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)

Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement

EU classified — RESTRIET-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision [2015/444](#)

Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D1.1	1st Periodic progress report	WP1	1 - LEVER	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	10
D1.2	Final progress report	WP1	1 - LEVER	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	24
D2.1	Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD	WP2	2 - ICAS	R — Document, report	PU - Public	10
D2.2	Roadmap (revised to the existing one) to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD	WP2	4 - kartECO	R — Document, report	PU - Public	20
D2.3	Training report on legal aspects and fundamental principles of the EU Directives	WP2	5 - EcoContact	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	20
D3.1	Overview of Republic of Moldova Emerald sites and support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the EU Nature criteria and Bern Convention	WP3	2 - ICAS	R — Document, report	PU - Public	8
D3.2	Revised proposals to existing Emerald Sites	WP3	2 - ICAS	R — Document, report	PU - Public	12
D3.3	Training report on technical aspects related to EU Nature Directives	WP3	5 - EcoContact	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	12

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

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Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D3.4	Knowledge Repository Hub	WP3	4 - kartECO	R — Document, report	PU - Public	16
D3.5	GIS database	WP3	4 - kartECO	DATA — data sets, microdata, etc	PU - Public	20
D4.1	Report on the method and results of the criteria-based prioritization of sites, species, and habitats	WP4	3 - EKBY	R — Document, report	PU - Public	12
D4.2	Guidelines i. for the preparation of action plans for the prioritized habitat types and species of Community interest and ii. for Emerald/Natura 2000 site appropriate management including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts.	WP4	3 - EKBY	R — Document, report	PU - Public	16
D4.3	Supporting material on EU Habitat and Bird Directives monitoring and reporting requirements	WP4	3 - EKBY	R — Document, report	PU - Public	18
D4.4	Training report on EU Habitats and Birds Directives' requirements	WP4	3 - EKBY	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	21
D5.1	After-LIFE RENATA Sustainability Plan	WP5	1 - LEVER	R — Document, report	PU - Public	24
D5.2	Replication and Exploitation Plan	WP5	1 - LEVER	R — Document, report	PU - Public	20
D5.3	Transformation feasibility assessment	WP5	2 - ICAS	R — Document, report	PU - Public	22

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)

Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement

EU classified — RESTRICTED-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision [2015/444](#)

Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D6.1	LIFE RENATA Dissemination and communication	WP6	1 - LEVER	R — Document, report	PU - Public	24
D7.1	Monitoring and evaluation reporting	WP7	1 - LEVER	R — Document, report	PU - Public	24



Deliverable D1.1 – 1st Periodic progress report

Deliverable Number	D1.1	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Deliverable Name	1st Periodic progress report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	10	Work Package No	WP1

Description			
Based on the Programme template Format: Electronic, Language: English, Estimated number of pages: max 50			

Deliverable D1.2 – Final progress report

Deliverable Number	D1.2	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Deliverable Name	Final progress report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	24	Work Package No	WP1

Description			
Based on the Programme template Format: Electronic, Language: English, Estimated number of pages: max 50			

Deliverable D2.1 – Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD

Deliverable Number	D2.1	Lead Beneficiary	2 - ICAS
Deliverable Name	Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	10	Work Package No	WP2

Description			
Submission of report in doc, (RO/EN) including Consultation meeting results			

Deliverable D2.2 – Roadmap (revised to the existing one) to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD

Deliverable Number	D2.2	Lead Beneficiary	4 - kartECO
Deliverable Name	Roadmap (revised to the existing one) to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public



Due Date (month)	20	Work Package No	WP2
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Description	
Submission of report in doc, (RO/EN) including Consultation meeting results	

Deliverable D2.3 – Training report on legal aspects and fundamental principles of the EU Directives

Deliverable Number	D2.3	Lead Beneficiary	5 - EcoContact
Deliverable Name	Training report on legal aspects and fundamental principles of the EU Directives		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	20	Work Package No	WP2

Description	
A final report will include all supporting documentation (topics, agenda, invitations, list of participants, ways of communicating or training, meeting outputs/outcomes etc.).	

Deliverable D3.1 – Overview of Republic of Moldova Emerald sites and support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the EU Nature criteria and Bern Convention

Deliverable Number	D3.1	Lead Beneficiary	2 - ICAS
Deliverable Name	Overview of Republic of Moldova Emerald sites and support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the EU Nature criteria and Bern Convention		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	8	Work Package No	WP3

Description	
Overview of Republic of Moldova Emerald sites and support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the Bern Convention and EU Nature criteria in doc, (RO/EN) including databases with Excel, Jpeg, shp, kmz, files	

Deliverable D3.2 – Revised proposals to existing Emerald Sites

Deliverable Number	D3.2	Lead Beneficiary	2 - ICAS
Deliverable Name	Revised proposals to existing Emerald Sites		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	12	Work Package No	WP3

Description	



Revised proposals to existing Emerald Sites and updates in doc, (RO/EN) including databases with Excel, Jpeg, shp, kmz, files

Deliverable D3.3 – Training report on technical aspects related to EU Nature Directives

Deliverable Number	D3.3	Lead Beneficiary	5 - EcoContact
Deliverable Name	Training report on technical aspects related to EU Nature Directives		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	12	Work Package No	WP3

Description

A final report will include all supporting documentation (topics, agenda, invitations, list of participants, ways of communicating or training, meeting outputs/outcomes etc.).

Deliverable D3.4 – Knowledge Repository Hub

Deliverable Number	D3.4	Lead Beneficiary	4 - kartECO
Deliverable Name	Knowledge Repository Hub		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	16	Work Package No	WP3

Description

Upload to project web page the Knowledge repository Hub design and short report on Hub architecture.

Deliverable D3.5 – GIS database

Deliverable Number	D3.5	Lead Beneficiary	4 - kartECO
Deliverable Name	GIS database		
Type	DATA — data sets, microdata, etc	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	20	Work Package No	WP3

Description

Final set of Shp files

Deliverable D4.1 – Report on the method and results of the criteria-based prioritization of sites, species, and habitats

Deliverable Number	D4.1	Lead Beneficiary	3 - EKBY
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Deliverable Name	Report on the method and results of the criteria-based prioritization of sites, species, and habitats		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	12	Work Package No	WP4

Description
Report in doc, (RO/EN) including databases with Excel

Deliverable D4.2 – Guidelines i.for the preparation of action plans for the prioritized habitat types and species of Community interest and ii.for Emerald/Natura 2000 site appropriate management including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts.

Deliverable Number	D4.2	Lead Beneficiary	3 - EKBY
Deliverable Name	Guidelines i.for the preparation of action plans for the prioritized habitat types and species of Community interest and ii.for Emerald/Natura 2000 site appropriate management including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts.		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	16	Work Package No	WP4

Description
Report in doc, (RO/EN) including databases with Excel

Deliverable D4.3 – Supporting material on EU Habitat and Bird Directives monitoring and reporting requirements

Deliverable Number	D4.3	Lead Beneficiary	3 - EKBY
Deliverable Name	Supporting material on EU Habitat and Bird Directives monitoring and reporting requirements		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	18	Work Package No	WP4

Description
Report in doc, (RO/EN) including databases with Excel

Deliverable D4.4 – Training report on EU Habitats and Birds Directives' requirements

Deliverable Number	D4.4	Lead Beneficiary	3 - EKBY
Deliverable Name	Training report on EU Habitats and Birds Directives' requirements		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	21	Work Package No	WP4

Description			
A final report will include all supporting documentation (topics, agenda, invitations, list of participants, ways of communicating or training, meeting outputs/outcomes etc.).			

Deliverable D5.1 – After-LIFE RENATA Sustainability Plan

Deliverable Number	D5.1	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Deliverable Name	After-LIFE RENATA Sustainability Plan		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	24	Work Package No	WP5

Description			
Format: Electronic, Language: English, Romanian			
Estimated number of pages: max 30			

Deliverable D5.2 – Replication and Exploitation Plan

Deliverable Number	D5.2	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Deliverable Name	Replication and Exploitation Plan		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	20	Work Package No	WP5

Description			
Format: Electronic, Language: English, Romanian			
Estimated number of pages: max 30			

Deliverable D5.3 – Transformation feasibility assessment

Deliverable Number	D5.3	Lead Beneficiary	2 - ICAS
Deliverable Name	Transformation feasibility assessment		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	22	Work Package No	WP5

Description			
Format: Electronic, Language: English, Romanian			
Estimated number of pages: max 40			

Deliverable D6.1 – LIFE RENATA Dissemination and communication

Deliverable Number	D6.1	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Deliverable Name	LIFE RENATA Dissemination and communication		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public

Due Date (month)	24	Work Package No	WP6
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Description	
A report presenting the the project's outreach material (website, project pages, Layman's report, e-newsletters, infographics, social media, publications in scientific journals and conferences) Format: Electronic, Language: English, Estimated number of pages: max 50	

Deliverable D7.1 – Monitoring and evaluation reporting

Deliverable Number	D7.1	Lead Beneficiary	1 - LEVER
Deliverable Name	Monitoring and evaluation reporting		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	24	Work Package No	WP7

Description	
1st iteration – mid M10; 2nd iteration – final M27	

LIST OF MILESTONES

Milestones					
Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.					
Milestone No	Milestone Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Means of Verification	Due Date (month)
1	Kick off meeting	WP1	1 - LEVER	Periodic report (D1.2)	1
2	Creation of the Management guide	WP1	1 - LEVER	Periodic report (D1.2)	2
3	Second prefinancing	WP1	1 - LEVER	Periodic report (D1.2)	12
4	Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)	WP2	4 - kartECO	The SEP: Document mapping stakeholders and describing the plan to actively engage them in the project	3
5	Questionnaire design and process completion	WP2	5 - EcoContact	Questionnaire and report on questionnaire's results	4
6	1st Consultation meeting with representatives from national and local relevant authorities, key biodiversity experts, protected area managers, NGOs etc.	WP2	2 - ICAS	Report on 1st consultation workshop: working document shared prior to the workshop, agenda, invitations, list of participants, presentations, conclusions, next steps.	6
7	2nd Consultation meeting with representatives from national and local relevant authorities, key biodiversity experts, protected area managers, NGOs etc.	WP2	2 - ICAS	Report on 2nd Consultation meeting	12
8	Roadmap draft for review	WP2	4 - kartECO	Submission of draft version and 1 day meeting presentation of Roadmap draft to National authority	16
9	Revised proposals of Emerald sites in MD to get closer to EU Habitat Directives - draft for review	WP3	2 - ICAS	Submission of draft report of revised proposals and mapping files and discussed during 2nd Consultation meeting	12
10	Criteria and rules for prioritization	WP4	3 - EKBY	Submission of technical document	8

Milestones

Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.

Milestone No	Milestone Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Means of Verification	Due Date (month)
11	European conference	WP6	2 - ICAS	D.6.1	20
12	Local seminar	WP6	2 - ICAS	D.6.1	22

LIST OF CRITICAL RISKS

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
1	Withdrawal of a partner from the Consortium. Impact: High Likelihood: Low	WP1	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous and effective monitoring of partner's progress. • Inform the project's managing bodies (Project Manager, Steering Committee and Work Package Leaders). <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the LIFE Programme Monitoring team. • Communication with all partners and redistribution of tasks. • Re-allocation of the partner's effort to the remaining partners. <p>If critical competencies lack in existing partners, find new one. Most of the partners participate in relevant projects and clusters and will make use of these potential networks.</p>
2	Withdrawal of a key staff member that has major involvement in the project. Impact: Medium Likelihood: Medium	WP2, WP6, WP5, WP1, WP7, WP4, WP3	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous and effective monitoring of technical staff's progress. • Inform the project's managing bodies (Project Manager, Steering Committee and Work Package Leaders). <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the LIFE Programme Contracting Authority.

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication with all staff members and redistribution of tasks. Re-allocation of the staff member's effort to the remaining staff. <p>If critical competencies lack in existing staff, cover the relevant position with a new staff member having the appropriate background</p>
3	Delays in delivering several project's result. Impact: High Likelihood: Medium	WP2, WP6, WP5, WP1, WP7, WP4, WP3	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous monitoring of WP activities and communication with WP Leaders. Effective allocation and planning of work from the WP Leaders. <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of causes for the delay and possible actions may include: Re-estimation and planning of activities. Re-allocation of the partner's activities and effort. <p>Tighter schedule to monitor progress in greater detail.</p>
4	Low progress on engagement with stakeholders, experts and general public in terms of effectively disseminating the project's outcomes, and assisting their continuation after the project's end, as well as and their replication in other regions. Impact: High Likelihood: Medium	WP2	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing partners with strong communications and outreach networks. Existing partners with significant experience in LIFE after-plan activities. Strong preparation <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push communication, dissemination, and replication activities. <p>Initiate personal contacts from each partner to their networks</p>
5	Unwillingness and low participation of stakeholders in project actions, such as training seminars and consultation meetings. Impact: High Likelihood: Medium	WP2, WP5, WP4, WP3	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement of all interested stakeholders by communicating and asking their commitment through the central directorates of the Ministry. Provide participation certification, cover travel expenses and select appropriate time and place after consultation with the Ministry. <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate personal contacts of the Moldova project partners.
6	Delays in public authorities' procedures (substitution of permanent personnel, retirement, transfer, lack of personnel, calls for tender	WP1	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch calls for tender at the very early phase of the project. <p>Corrective actions:</p>

Critical risks & risk management strategy

Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.

Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
	procedures). Impact: High Likelihood: Low/Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced personnel will assist in minimizing delays by channeling their knowledge to new staff entries and relieve workload.
7	Natural catastrophes (e.g. fire, flood) and software virus, that may destroy the operating systems and hardware parts. Impact: High Likelihood: Low	WP2, WP6, WP5, WP1, WP7, WP4, WP3	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of concrete steps and protocols for backup data plan, data storage, high level of cyber security protection. <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The above steps and protocols will be activated.
8	Non-homogenised, non-compatible or even contradictory biodiversity information included in different datasets and sources (e.g. differences in nomenclature and taxonomy of species, differences in the use of population unit for the same species between the datasets). Impact: Low Likelihood: High	WP3	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity experts will be contracted by ICAS. <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracted biodiversity experts will put into effect the correct form (e.g. use of the most recent nomenclature and taxonomy to older records, conversion of “pairs” in “individuals” as regards population unit).
9	Multitude of information and different backgrounds hindering a common understanding between ecologists, policy makers, site managers, and biodiversity experts etc. of what is expected from the project. Impact: Medium Likelihood: High	WP2, WP5, WP4, WP3	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close collaboration and broad consultations throughout the project will take place with various stakeholders (ecologists, conservation biologists, policy makers, protected area managers, conservation consultants, practitioners) via project meetings, the training seminars and the pilot demonstration will make clear the objectives of LIFE RENATA project and the EU priorities for moving from Emerald to Natura 2000 network. <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push communication, dissemination, and replication activities.
10	Delays due changes in governmental policies or restructuring in the Ministries organigrams, political instability/financial crisis/war Impact: Medium/High Likelihood: Medium/High	WP2, WP6, WP5, WP1, WP7, WP4, WP3	<p>Preventive actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A major part of the project activities is implemented by the Greek partners. <p>Corrective actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate project prolongation. Greek partners assist to overcome such delays by hands-on help.

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Project summary

See Abstract (Application Form Part A).

#\$PRJ-SUM-PS\$# #@REL-EVA-RE@# #@PRJ-OBJ-PO@#

1. RELEVANCE

1.1 Background and project objectives **Background and project objectives**

Describe the specific objectives of your project (clear, measurable, realistic and achievable within the duration of the project).

For **BEST**: Provide a clear and quantified description of the conservation issues and threats targeted, as well as relevant background information and quantified figures defining the baseline to justify the planned interventions and their location.

LIFE RENATA Rationale

The Republic of Moldova (MD) is currently a Member of the Emerald Network that is a Pan-European ecological network with the goal to preserve biodiversity in Europe. The Emerald Network is the Natura 2000 relevant nature conservation mechanism in Non-EU European countries, like the MD. It was created to integrate the European network and is based on the Bern Convention. Unlike the EU-directives, it is not legally binding.

The Emerald Network Viewer¹ enables to locate and visualise the proposed/candidate and officially adopted sites of MD. Official current status and historical background of progress on the Emerald Network in MD is illustrated in the Emerald Barometer². Currently (last updated in 2022)³, the MD has adopted 61 sites, that cover an area of 2,744.6 km² (8.1 % land area coverage, including 0% coastal/marine coverage). However, the online database regarding Emerald sites and Barometer for MD has not been updated since 2016-2017. Therefore, important differences exist between the National coverage of all sites in the database used in Phase I, and the National coverage of Adopted Emerald Network sites of Phase II. In order to ensure sustainability of identified species and connectivity of habitats, in Phase II, an additional number of new Emerald sites has been appointed to safeguard corridors for migrative species between major sites. Regarding the sufficiency index (Emerald establishment phase - Phase II), according to the Emerald Barometer⁴, the MD participated in two Emerald Network sufficiency assessment rounds (5 seminars) from 2015-2019⁵. Based on those assessments it ended up to a level of 24,1%, meaning that expertise assistance

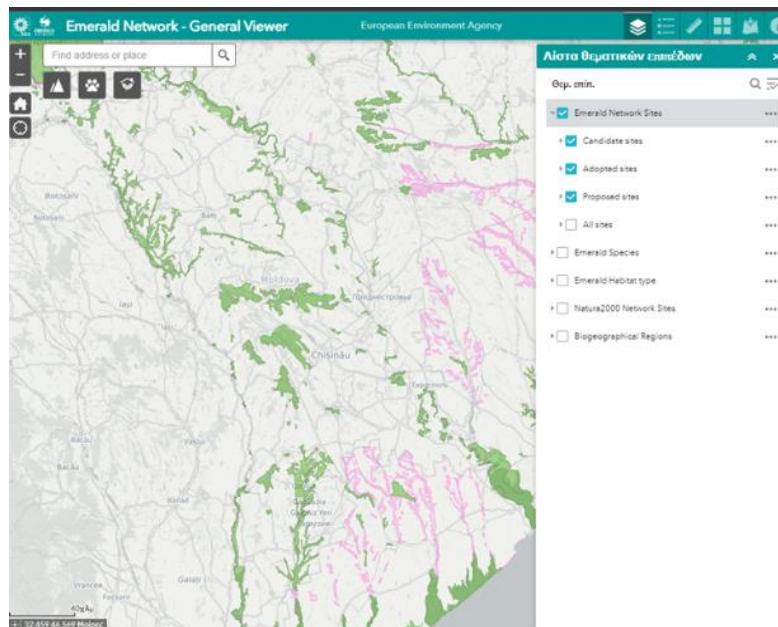


Figure 1: Emerald Network sites in MD
(<https://emerald.eea.europa.eu/>)

¹ <https://emerald.eea.europa.eu/>

² https://tableau-public.discomap.eea.europa.eu/views/EmeraldBarometerdashboard/Barometertable?%3AshowAppBanner=false&%3Adisplay_count=n&%3AshowVizHome=n&%3Aorigin=viz_share_link&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y

³ <https://rm.coe.int/pa10e-2022-updated-list-officially-adopted-emerald-sites/1680a93ca5>

⁴ https://tableau-public.discomap.eea.europa.eu/views/EmeraldBarometerdashboard/Barometertable?%3AshowAppBanner=false&%3Adisplay_count=n&%3AshowVizHome=n&%3Aorigin=viz_share_link&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y

⁵ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/conclusions-of-the-biogeographical-seminars>

and effort to increase and complete the network soon is imperative, although MD has shown significant progress in comparison to other countries. According to the most recent assessment, out of 312 habitats and species, 134 were evaluated as insufficiently protected (only 7 were evaluated as Major unsuccessfully protected; and the rest as Moderate and Minor insufficiently protected), meaning that Republic of Moldova fully completed Phase II⁶, according to the consolidated sufficiency conclusions database. For example, for 22 habitat types (out of the 73) the assessment showed "moderate insufficiently protected (IN MOD)" which according to the description, means that one or more additional sites (or extensions of sites) must be proposed, to achieve a sufficient coverage of the Emerald network in MD. Similar enhancements of the Emerald sites are required for 38 species (out of 239). Thus, there is need of official reply on behalf of the Ministry of Environment to the Bern Committee that requires expert review on sites and species assessed during the biogeographical seminars⁷.

Following the decision by the European Council on 23 June 2022, MD was granted the status of candidate country for EU membership, which further reinforces the country's engagement in the implementation of EU policies and the acquis. Thus, is it necessary for MD to move closer to the EU standards for the conservation of species and habitats and facilitate key stakeholders with knowledge and tools for the future implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000. A first step to achieve this is by providing support on three interrelated horizontal components: Legal, technical, and operational.

Nowadays, a World Bank-led initiative in MD, under EU4Environment Program sub-component 4.1: Support to protect biodiversity and natural ecosystems (Emerald network), that aims to advance the establishment of the Emerald Network and management of the Emerald Sites in the Eastern Europe countries⁸ is also currently under progress presenting the country's strong commitment.

LIFE RENATA's leverage

LIFE RENATA is in line with "EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030–Bringing nature back into our lives"⁹ since it will bring MD closer to it, not only to observe and follow, but move forward to support it. Specifically, MD -after project end-, will be well prepared to expand protected areas and help establish a coherent Trans-European Nature Network, that is a major target component under pillar one (Protecting nature in the EU). Also, a pilot demonstration example will run and test -close to project end- the developed tools and implementation methods of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 in a "strong" and "weak" -on a conservation management basis- selected case. A focus will be put on a site that currently overlaps with other protected area and a second site will be selected from the ones that are managed by Local Public Authorities or in a close by region, lacking in this way Management Plans and Proper Management and Conservation Measures. Respectively, the pilot examples suggested for the current project are Plaiul Fagului (MD0000003, surface 5850 ha) and Stepa Bugeacului (MD00000016 – 49610 ha). Based on the pilot example results a feasibility transformation analysis to Natura 2000 in MD, will be developed.

Lastly, LIFE RENATA is fully in line with the objectives, goals and targets Vision for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 (<http://rm.coe.int/tpvs14e-2021-draft-vision/1680a43ffa>), Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 (<https://rm.coe.int/tpvs21e-2022-strategic-plan-8th-draft/1680a8bea8>) and post-2020 Work Plan for the Network (<https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-of-the-2011-2020-emerald-network-workplan-and-proposal-of-a/1680a040a9>).

Objectives and expected outcomes

LIFE-RENATA Specific Objectives (SO) per horizontal fundamental area are presented below:

LEGAL:

SO1. Support the species and habitats' conservation legal capacity in MD, via:

- a concise baseline assessment on the legal and institutional situation in MD policy and governance,
- a gap analysis of the existing vs. the expected situation, and
- a step-by-step approach on identifying the best way to go forward in establishing a realistic governance and institutions' legal basis, for transforming the MD Emerald sites' network into a Natura 2000 one.

The implementation will involve the following five horizontal components: 1) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site designation and establishment; 2) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site ecological criteria

⁶ The Emerald Network is aimed to guarantee the long-term survival of all habitats listed in Resolution No. 4 (1996) and all species listed in Resolution No. 6 (1998) of the Bern Convention. This would automatically suggest a target of 100% sufficiency. The sufficiency index can only theoretically be of 100%. Over the time both nature changes and scientific knowledge constantly improves, thus countries need to step back from previous sufficiency conclusions and carry out additional, unanticipated work. Therefore, a sufficiency index of over 95% could be considered a good achievement, <https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-of-the-2011-2020-emerald-network-workplan-and-proposal-of-a/1680a040a9>

⁷ <https://rm.coe.int/proposal-of-a-monitoring-framework-to-monitor-the-implementation-of-th/16809f8777>

⁸ <https://www.eu4environment.org/events/awareness-raising-event-on-prospects-for-the-emerald-network-development-in-moldova-policy-and-legal-aspects/>

⁹ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/31e4609f-b91e-11eb-8aca-01aa75ed71a1>

fulfilment and correspondence to the relevant EU Directives; 3) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site management (e.g..APse.g.; PS/MPs); 4) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site monitoring and reporting; 5) Introducing in MD new policy trends, such as ecological coherence of the nature conservation network with ecological corridors, and wildlife restoration (EU Nature Restoration Plan).

SO2. Provide regulatory recommendations and a dynamic roadmap up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD.

TECHNICAL:

SO3. Support the technical capacity in MD. Improvement of the technical capacity will be achieved initially by reviewing, interpreting the assessment results of the insufficiency index for the MD Emerald sites, during the last biogeographical seminars. The lack of sufficiency will be addressed, by improving both the understanding and the knowledge gaps on the habitats and species' current and optimal status. In addition, the sufficiency index must also, be increased (>24,1%). Beside the stakeholders' and experts' understanding on the conservation status of species and habitats, an improved sufficiency assessment result includes recording and detail mapping of available information, for example, existing boundaries (shp), habitat mapping within sites -if any-, boundary logic, examining information quality and specifications elements of site SDFs, target species presence, etc. Also record and outline any operational aspects in site identification and designation, site management, monitoring and reporting in MD, identify and clarify if any conservation criteria and steps are followed per existing Emerald site and the correspondence to EU Nature Directives.

SO4. Developing a Knowledge Repository Hub (KRH) including a «Living» library and a pool of National / European experts. The KRH will foster the project's sustainability and promote the exploration of new initiatives by allowing the frequent communication among national and international experts and boosting knowledge sharing.

OPERATIONAL:

SO5. Improve local capacity by:

- Proposing and carrying out a criteria-based assessment to prioritize habitat types, species and Emerald/Natura 2000 sites.
- Providing standards for context and processes for the preparation of Action Plans for habitat types and species of Community interest with unfavourable conservation status.
- Developing technical guidelines for Emerald/Natura 2000 sites appropriate management.
- Providing monitoring and reporting tools for Emerald/Natura 2000 sites future assessments.

SO6. Implement a feasibility study for Emerald to Natura 2000 transformation in MD, based on two pilot examples (a strong and a weak case in terms of conservation level). The derived feasibility study will support policy decisions and future steps for Emerald to Natura 2000 transformation in MD.

The **expected outcomes** by the implementation of LIFE-RENATA are:

1. Two (2) National authorities in MD will get closer to the EU standards for the conservation of species and habitats and will be facilitated with knowledge and tools for the future implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000;
2. A technical review of the 61 Adopted sites and a new complete updated/modified/corrected set of proposed sites for MD including SDFs, boundaries, shp-kmz files. This set will be modified based on EU standards for the conservation of species and habitats (and Bern Convention);
3. Increasing the sufficiency index (%) (>24,1%) of the Emerald establishment phase (Phase II) in MD by examining 22 habitat types (out of the 73) which the sufficiency has assessed as "insufficient moderate (IN MOD)". Similar enhancements of the Emerald sites are required for 38 species (out of 239);
4. An Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations output including a SWOT analysis to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in MD;
5. One (1) Roadmap (revised) presenting a dynamic framework up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD with performance indicators e.g. expected number of new Aps;
6. A Knowledge Repository Hub including a «Living» library with more than 50 references and a pool of more than 50 National / European experts;
7. A transitional feasibility study based on two pilot demonstration examples i.e., a "strong" and "weak" conservation case in MD;
8. One (1) geodatabase containing all spatial information related to the Emerald sites in MD;
9. One (1) report on the method and results of the criteria-based prioritization of sites, species, and habitats;
10. One (1) document (ready to use) of the proposed structure and guidelines for future Action Plans (APs) and for Emerald/Natura 2000 planning site Management;
11. One (1) document on Guidelines for Monitoring and reporting requirements and best practices;
12. Three (3) capacity building training events with team partners, key stakeholders' representatives and officers, experts, academics etc. Indicative training participants >25 (total);
13. Three (3) Consultation and public awareness meeting. Indicative participants >25 per meeting;
14. One (1) Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). The SEP will be designed and implemented taking into

consideration gender equality and accessibility issues.

1.1 Compliance with the call topic

Compliance with the call topic

Indicate the call topic to which your proposal relates, and explain how the proposed project addresses the scope of the topic description in the Call document.

LIFE RENATA is addressing the call topic “Supporting the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 in Ukraine and Moldova, on the basis of their current Emerald network of sites under the Bern Convention”. LIFE RENATA aim is to support the Republic of Moldova (MD) in advancing the establishment and management of the Emerald Network of protected sites and to move closer to the EU standards for the conservation of species and habitats. A first step to achieve this is by providing MD support on three interrelated components: Legal, technical, and operational. These three components constitute the general LIFE-RENATA framework design.

On legal and policy level an Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations output - including a SWOT analysis- will be prepared. Also, close to the project ending a Roadmap is scheduled to be prepared. This will be a dynamic framework up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD.

On technical and operational level LIFE RENATA will support all basic aspects, principles, and criteria on biodiversity protection under EU Nature Directive specifications and Natura 2000 site management. Such aspects will be 1) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site designation and establishment 2) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site ecological criteria fulfilment and correspondence to EU Nature Directives 3) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site management status and effectiveness 4) Emerald network/potential Natura 2000 site monitoring and 5) Introducing new policy trends such as Ecological coherence.

At the end of the project, MD partners and stakeholders will not only become familiar to EU Natura 2000 assessment and specifications through capacity building and joint WP tasks, but will also have a pool of guidelines, data and tools: Institutional and legislative reform recommendations including a SWOT analysis, technical reviews, monitoring tools, reporting standards, guidelines for Monitoring and reporting requirements and best practices, the Knowledge Repository Hub, a transitional feasibility study and a roadmap (revised to the anticipated by mid-2024) up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000. These outputs will contribute to project sustainability and in strengthening the partnership between the MD and EU countries, sharing the same values, and setting the basis for enhancing joint efforts of cooperation on protecting biodiversity across and beyond the EU borders.

The consortium includes the Ministry of Environment of the MD as associated partner which is responsible for developing and promoting Moldova's state policy on environmental protection and rational use of natural resources, and oriented toward creating conditions beneficial for life, the country's sustainable development, international cooperation, and the approximation of national legislation to the European Union. The Ministry of Environment implements projects through its' subordinated institutions and the National Office for the Implementation of the Environmental Projects. For the current assignment, Ministry of Environment appointed the Institute of Forest Research and Development (ICAS) as the central authority for the implementation of the project. A letter of confirmation from the Ministry appointing the ICAS as the competent organization that has the expertise and capacity to implement the activities related to this proposal in Moldova is attached.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment, as the top-level authority in the MD, will involve during the project implementation all other relevant actors and organizations including “Moldsilva” Agency – that at present is responsible for the management of the Protected Areas (PAs) in MD. Taking into account, that an institutional reform is in place and foresees the creation of a responsible agency for the management of the PAs, the current project has on board the Ministry of Environment, who will share the results and project deliverables with the created institution – in the case it will be established after the project completion. Nevertheless, to ensure sustainability of the actions, the project partners will involve all relevant actors in the MD for the management, planning of the PAs and Emerald Network, so as in the end, no matter the institutional reforms – the information, knowledges acquired, and skills to be equally transferred and shared with all relevant stakeholders. .

#\$PRJ-OBJ-PO\$# #@CON-MET-CM@#

1.2 Concept and methodology

Concept and methodology

Describe the overall intervention logic of the project, including the main idea and assumptions (i.e. how are the proposed activities and steps of your project expected to lead to the intended changes in terms of outcomes and impacts).

Explain the methodology, i.e. the main tools, techniques, methods and procedures you will use to implement the technical part of your project. Justify why the proposed methodology is the most suitable for achieving the project's objectives

For BEST:

Explain how the methodology guarantees the maximum level of coordination and coherence between the individual small grants (especially when operating in the same geographical area), logical continuity of interventions and long term impact.

Describe the selection process of the small grants (including the criteria for selection).

The core WP activities (WP 2,3,4) will support MD in three basic components: legal, technical and operational. WPs 2,3, 4 and 5 are interlinked. These components will ensure project sustainability and will bring MD closer to the EU conservation of species and habitats standards, hence they will expand, and help built the Trans-European Natura 2000 network. Core WP activities will cover the following Natura 2000 fundamental aspects ie., 1) site designation and establishment, 2) site ecological criteria fulfilment according to the relevant EU Nature Directives, 3) effective site management status and assessment, 4) site monitoring, and 5) introducing new policy trends such as ecological coherence of the network, ie. Habitat connectivity, ecological corridors, wildlife restoration (EU Nature Restoration Plan).

The legal component (WP2) will support MD by preparing a preliminary legal and institutional baseline study of the national nature protection and conservation current state. Next, a gap analysis will identify possible governance barriers and risks. Proposed recommendations on institutional and legislative basis, will produce - aligned to the rest WPs- a transformation Roadmap (up to 2030) (revised to the anticipated by mid-2024) to the Natura 2000 Network based on the Emerald one, in MD.

The technical component (WP3) aims to match the corresponding criteria/specifications of the EU Nature Directives with the Emerald Network sites. This might take place directly by existing or by identifying new or modifying/expanding existing Emerald areas' boundaries. It is expected that it will progressively lead -after a set of possible national authority reviews and discussion- on a revised proposal of the existing MD Emerald Sites corresponding to the EU Nature Directives' policy. Initially a review in detail will be done for the Republic of MD Emerald sites status. Next, it will address possible lack of knowledge or understanding in key-aspects of the EU Nature Directives' definitions and tools, such as SDFs, status assessment, conservation criteria, target or key habitats and species, site boundaries, fields missing, other gaps, outdate or not information, e.tc. The output that will be processed by the local (stakeholders, scientists, NGOs, etc.) and the EU team of experts will have a double end. The first is to provide MD national authorities with a concise and good assessment of the baseline situation regarding MD Emerald sites, as presented currently: in the EU Emerald platform files, in contemporary national initiatives and future planning actions. Secondly, it will provide a technical capacity and a background material for decision making in identifying new areas (expanding, modifying nature conservation sites or proposing new). Finally, a Knowledge Repository Hub (KRH) will be designed. It will work both as a «Living» library and a pool of National / European experts. The Hub will share the necessary information, project outputs and will enforce better competencies, for establishing a Natura 2000 site management in MD. The Hub structure will be dynamic and expandable to future additional functions e.g. Web-GIS, Technological-Data platform and other, thus will strongly contribute to project sustainability, since it could be a part of a future unified National biodiversity HUB. The GIS database benefits include improved spatial visualization, data management, and analysis capabilities. It will provide MD officers with a structured and organized platform for storing and accessing geospatial data, assisting decision-making processes and supporting the long-term management of MD's Emerald Network/future Natura 2000. Furthermore, the geodatabase can be expanded and integrated with other technological platforms, contributing to the establishment of a unified National Biodiversity Hub that can continue to serve MD's conservation efforts in the future.

The operational component (WP4) will prepare a series of useful and ready to use tools for MD site managers and competent authorities. Such deliverables will be a handbook, a practical guide or guidelines on how to develop an Action Plan for habitats and species of EU Community interest with unfavourable conservation status, guidelines for monitoring and EU reporting tools, according to EU Habitat and Bird Directives (Articles 11 and 17) and also, a set of technical specification and codes of conducts will be prepared in the context of the site management.

Every one of the core WPs (Legal, Technical, Operational) ie., 2,3,4 before ending, will have a separate and dedicated Task on capacity building and competence enhancement session, especially for competent authority and site managers. Dedicated workshops will take place in MD and Greece. The later will contribute to enhance competencies in MD for future Natura 2000 site management. It will be also a first step for strengthening the partnership between Republic of Moldova and EU countries and help understanding the differences of Bern Convention and EU Habitat Directives, methods, and specifications for the future transformation. A pilot example will test the implementation of the developed tools and methods during an exercise in a "strong" and "weak" selected case (T.5.3). Based on the pilot example feasibility results, a transformation analysis from the Emerald network of protected areas, into the Natura 2000 one in MD, will take place.

Local MD (subcontractors of ICAS) biodiversity experts will be trained by EU experts, via desktop workshops and field activities, to facilitate the understanding of the processes that support the EU Birds and Habitats Directives (EU Nature Directives).

Possible links and synergies with the running (2023-2024) World Bank-led activities under EU4Environment Program sub-component 4.1 will be explored during the early stages of the project. The EU4Environment Program sub-component 4.1 is for support and protect biodiversity and natural ecosystems (Emerald network), that aim to advance the establishment of the Emerald Network and management of the Emerald Sites in the Eastern Partner countries (<https://www.eu4environment.org/events/awareness-raising-event-on-prospects-for-the-emerald-network-development-in-moldova-policy-and-legal-aspects/>). It should be highlighted that EcoContact and kartECO are currently project leaders in the mentioned WB activity for MD and Armenia. Thus, they is the opportunity of a know-how transfer, as well as, experience and challenges met, and lessons learned to the project activities. Other running project consultants will be invited to thoroughly present their objectives, possible outputs and explore possible synergies (Austrian Development Agency, GEF etc). The relevant authorities of Greece, NECCA, currently undertaking the LIFE IP4 project (see letter attached in Annex), agreed for a meeting with the Moldavian (and Ukraine participants) in Greece, in order to demonstrate them the goals, the achievements, any specifications of the Action Plans and the conservation actions implemented and/or challenges, and lessons learned by that LIFE project (<https://edozoume.gr/en/>).

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1.3 Upscaling results of other EU funded projects

Upscaling results of other EU funded projects (n/a for TA CAP and PLP)

Explain if and how the proposal builds on or up-scales results of other EU funded projects.

Not applicable

1.4 Complementarity with other actions

Complementarity with other actions (n/a for TA CAP and PLP)

Explain how the project is complementary to other regional, national or international initiatives/activities/projects. How will it integrate the results from these other actions?

Not applicable

1.5 Synergies and co-benefits with other EU policy areas

Synergies and co-benefits with other EU policy areas (n/a for TA CAP and PLP)

Describe the synergies and positive spillover effects (co-benefits) with other EU policy areas (for example agriculture, health, civil protection, jobs and growth, etc.). If possible, quantify the contribution.

Identify the activities/tasks that address these other EU policy objectives.

Not applicable

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2. IMPACT

2.1 Ambition and credibility of the impacts Ambition and credibility of the impacts

Identify and quantify the effects of the project. Wherever possible, use quantified indicators and targets.

LIFE RENATAs' overarching ambition is to facilitate the future implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 in the Republic of Moldova (MD), considering a holistic approach, through recommending reformation of their legal acquis and transfer of advancing knowledge, skills and competences to the responsible authorities to protect important animal and plant species as well as their habitats in their countries. Within this framework, specific effects of the project are provided in the following table, categorized in three key components (legal, technical and operational) and associated with particular target groups and

quantified project results or performance indicators.

Effect/impact 1: **LEGAL RESULTS**

Relation to Call's Objective:	Support for a preliminary study to define baselines, identify barriers and risks and propose a roadmap, legal recommendations and best practices that can be applied in order to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites	
Results	<p>1.1 Institutional and legislative baseline findings and recommendations output including a SWOT analysis to establish and improve the management of Emerald sites in the MD.</p> <p>1.2 Roadmap for the MD. A dynamic –based on the currently prepared- framework initiative up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD with performance indicators e.g., expected number of new APs.</p> <p>1.3 Legal recommendations such as Law Amendments on the Natura Directive (that in this case, for example, two Laws can be assessed)</p> <p>1.4 Roadmap performance indicators e.g. expected number of new APs (anticipated)</p> <p>1.5 Consultation meetings</p> <p>1.6 Capacity building training event with team partners, key stakeholders' representatives and officers, experts, academics etc.</p>	<p>One (1) Report on findings / state-of-the-art</p> <p>One (1) Roadmap (revised to the anticipated by mid-2024) inc. Performance indicators for MD</p> <p>>2 legal recommendations (in the form of Law Amendments)</p> <p>>3 Roadmap performance indicators</p> <p>Two (2) meetings; >25/meeting</p> <p>One (1) event; >15 participants</p>
Main target groups	Key policy- and decision-makers eg. Ministry of Environment-MD; Focal point for Emeralds	

Effect/impact 2: **TECHNICAL RESULTS**

Relation to Call's Objective:	Support for mapping sites and identifying site-specific conservation objectives and measures, creating arrangements for information and knowledge sharing among key audiences and for building capacity of competent authority and site managers	
Results	<p>2.1 Size of proposed identified areas (expanding, modifying or new) in MD as a result of WP3</p> <p>2.2 Sufficiency Index assessment potential results as a result of WP3</p> <p>2.3 Potential increase in national coverage % after review and modifications proposed as a result of WP3</p> <p>2.4 Increase in number of species/increase in size of potential protected areas/ % increase of habitats/species identified under Birds and Habitats Directive Anex III in MD as a result of WP3</p> <p>2.5 A knowledge repository Hub including a «Living» library</p> <p>2.6 An updated GIS database (geodatabase) to provide a centralized repository for all geospatial data related to the Emerald Network project, facilitating informed decision-making, data sharing, analysis, and collaboration among stakeholders. It will serve as a valuable tool for managing, monitoring, and improving the Emerald Network's establishment and sustainability efforts in MD.</p>	<p>>1%-5% (estimated)</p> <p>>1%-10% (estimated)</p> <p>>1%-5% (estimated)</p> <p>>5 (estimated)</p> <p>> 20 references; a pool of >50 National/European experts</p> <p>Information included: Site Information (e.g., Site Name, Site ID or Code, Site Category, Site Area etc.); Geographical Information (e.g., Geographic Coordinates, Site Boundary Geometry); Habitat Data (e.g., Type, Code, Description, Area etc.); Species Data (e.g., Name, Code, Description, Abundance/Presence etc.); Legal and Regulatory Information (e.g., Relevant Directives and Regulations, Legal Designations and Categories); Infrastructure and Resources; Historical Data and Trends such as Historical Land Use Data and Historical Species Data; Metadata and</p>

	2.7 Capacity building training event with team partners, key stakeholders' representatives and officers, experts, academics etc.	Documentation; Mapping and Visualization One (1) event; >15 participants
Main target groups	Site managers; Biodiversity experts; Competent authorities and other stakeholder representatives and officers; Academics & research institutes	
Effect/impact 3: OPERATIONAL RESULTS		
Relation to Call's Objective:	Support for assessments, for the preparation of action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines for appropriate management, and support for the enhancement of monitoring and reporting	
Results	3.1 Guiding tools for MD site managers and competent authority officers for future use 3.2 Participatory meeting 3.3 Capacity building training event with team partners, key stakeholders' representatives and officers, experts, academics 3.4 One pilot example (two areas) and % size of expanding the pilot site areas and on National basis (if applicable) 3.5 Number of species/size of areas/% increase of habitats/species identified under Birds and Habitats Directive Annex III in the pilot areas and on National basis (if applicable)	Three (3) tools One (1) meeting; >25 participants One (1) event; >25 participants >1%-5% (estimated) >1 (estimated)
Main target groups	Site managers; Biodiversity experts; Competent authorities and other stakeholder representatives and officers; Academics & research institutes	

Credibility of the impacts

Credibility of the project impacts has been ensured through the project's activities. A concrete work plan in line with the projects expected impacts have been designed for this reason. Also, all experts involved are recognised Moldovan and Greek scientists and officers with great experience on biodiversity protection and natural habitats, as well as in policy design and implementation.

The results of LIFE RENATA aims at contributing in the project's expected impacts.

Expected Impact I.1	Facilitation of the future implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 in Moldova, with a good assessment of the baseline situation, improved knowledge about the actual presence of the habitats and species listed in the Birds and Habitats Directive and in the potential Natura 2000 sites, such as confirming and quantifying the presence of the species and habitats, producing more detailed maps, setting site-specific conservation objectives; as well the project will contribute to better guidance and enhanced competencies for establishing a Natura 2000 site management.
Credibility	The LIFE RENATA team is composed by senior researchers and experts both on biodiversity and natural habitats topics and on policy implementation, development and implementation. ICAS and EKBY, as research institutions, are responsible to provide concrete and validated information and findings presenting not only the state-of-the-art in Moldova but also recommendations for improvements and adaptations (WP2 & WP4). Also, EcoContact and kartECO are currently project leaders in the World Bank-led activities under EU4Environment Program sub-component 4.1: Support to protect biodiversity and natural ecosystems (Emerald network) that aims to advance the establishment of the Emerald Network and management of the Emerald Sites in the Eastern Partner countries for MD and Armenia. Thus they will transfer this knowledge into LIFE RENATA (WP3). EKBY has extensive experience in the implementation of EU legislation and policies, including the Habitats and Birds directives, as it was involved in the establishment of the Natura 2000 Network in Greece. Last, the Ministry of Environment of Moldova participates in the project as associated partner supporting the project's activities, giving also its commitment to adopt the findings and recommendations that will result by the project.
Expected Impact I.2	Strengthening the partnership between Moldova and EU, sharing the same values, and setting the basis for enhancing joint efforts of cooperation and thus protecting biodiversity across and beyond the EU borders.
Credibility	LIFE RENATA brings together experts from an EU country and Moldova which is under accession focusing on transferring the experience from Greece to Moldova. Greece has adopted and put into action the Bern Convention principals since 1983 (shortly after its adoption by the European Union in June 1982). Thus, the Greek administrative authorities

and other institutional bodies are very familiar with such topics and policies. 27,3% of the Greek land territory is covered by Natura 2000 areas (EKBY). The Natura network is regularly evaluated and updated by the Ministry of Environment and Energy with the collaboration of relevant institutions such as EKBY which is a project partner. Also, LIFE RENATA will develop a targeted Communication and Dissemination Plan including possible synergies with other LIFE projects, relevant projects of other EU Programmes (such as HE) and participation in EU events relevant to environmental policies, biodiversity and nature (WP6).

#@SUS-CON-SC@#

2.1 Sustainability of project results

Sustainability of project results

Describe your strategy to sustain the project's results after the EU funding ends. Consider the following aspects:

- How will the project impact be ensured and sustained? Which tasks will you carry out during the project to ensure that?
- Which parts of the project should be continued or maintained? How will this be achieved and which resources will be necessary?

The project Consortium recognises that the Sustainability of project results after the EU funding ends is very important for the under-accession countries. Therefore, the implementation methodology of LIFE RENATA is constructed on the orientation of continuation of project's outcomes after the end of it, including activities that will allow the continued utilization and further development of project's tools and services and the dissemination of results during and after its closure. More specifically, the following activities will be continued after the end of the project:

- On policy level and close to project ending a “conclusive” Roadmap (revised to the anticipated by mid-2024) is scheduled to be delivered (T2.3). This will be a dynamic framework initiative up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD with performance indicators e.g. expected number of new Action Plans. It will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment-MD and the MD Government to implement the Roadmap and other possibly necessary secondary legal actions e.g. Regulations, by-laws etc.
- The Knowledge repository Hub (T3.3). The Knowledge repository Hub will allow not only project sustainability but will go even further, for new initiatives exploration, since the Hub will allow frequent communication among national and international experts and knowledge feed. It will also assist the Ministry in the future to take-up of support and management measures that are scientifically proven. The Hub structure will be dynamic and expandable to future additional functions e.g. Web-GIS, Technological-Data platform thus could be a part of a future unified National biodiversity Hub. In addition, regarding the 2nd Hub function a pool of scientists -at national and international level- in different thematic areas such as, environmental biodiversity, Emerald/Protected areas management, conservation management, policy-legal, Remote Sensing, biodiversity recovery in case of extreme events e.g., catastrophic fires, will be prepared and -annually revised-. ICAS and MoE-MD will be responsible to update the Hub frequently.
- The GIS database (T3.3). The GIS database will be a complete mapping database in the possession of ICAS that should be continuously updated, consulted and will also allow reporting for international agreements. ICAS will be responsible to update the database frequently.
- The Communication and Dissemination plan will also provide the roadmap for the dissemination of the project results after the project's end (T6.1)

The MoE-MD and ICAS will be responsible for carrying out post project actions e.g. Administrating and managing the Knowledge Repository Hub. The above activities will be included and described in further detail in the After-LIFE. Sustainability plan that is foreseen in Task 5.1. The plan will secure the sustainability of the LIFE RENATA deliverables, the continuation of the communication and dissemination of the project results after its end and the high After-LIFE project exploitation.

##SUS-CON-SC##

2.2 Exploitation of project results

Exploitation of project results (n/a for TA CAP)

Do you foresee other ways of exploiting the project's results ? Who are the targeted users?

LIFE RENATA during its implementation will produce key results (inc. solutions and lessons learned) which will reach several stakeholders. A Replication and Exploitation Plan will be developed (T5.2) to ensure maximum adoption and most advantageous utilisation of these results. The table presents the key results of the project and the target groups that could exploit them and utilise them after the project.

Exploitation type	Provided by:	Addressing:
Key Result #1	MD Emerald Network Roadmap: a framework of guidelines and actions for advancing the Emerald Network in MD by 2030 integrating the EU policies and directives	
Policy makers: inc. national and regional administrative authorities of EU and under-accession counties, such as the Ministries of Environment to gain from the methodology and procedures for the harmonisation with EU practices for biodiversity and nature; <u>Scientific and Research organisations</u> : to further research on EU policies and practices for biodiversity and nature protection; <u>Emerald Network Viewer</u> : to provide further information to the Emerald Network stakeholders and to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention	kartECO, ICAS, EcoContact, MoE-MD, EKBY	Policy makers; administrative authorities (national & regional); relevant research institutions; Universities and researchers; The Emerald Network
Key Result #2	Knowledge Repository Hub: A digital repository to establish an “Expert panel” of National/European experts that will be kindly invited to participate. The project findings will be also provided to this list of experts for their information, for possible project replication and exploitation in other Trans-European Nature areas, by increasing future and funding cooperation opportunities in MD.	
Policy makers: inc. national and regional administrative authorities of EU and under-accession counties to be informed, network and exchange knowledge; <u>Scientific and Research organisations</u> : to enable further research on EU policies and practices for biodiversity and nature protection by approaching relevant experts; <u>Emerald Network and environmental experts</u> : to get access to a repository of knowledge for replication in other areas	kartECO, LEVER, EcoContact, EKBY	Policy makers; administrative authorities (national & regional); relevant research institutions; Universities and researchers; The Emerald Network
Key Result #3	GIS database: A geodatabase structured as a Geographic Database (GDB) file, encompassing a diverse array of geographical and non-geographical data elements, essential for the effective management and monitoring of the Emerald Network/Natura 2000 in the Republic of Moldova	
Policy makers: to develop appropriate assessment for the activities that are in the vicinity of an Emerald sites, as the Law modification of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment and SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment.) will enter into force in November 2023; <u>Scientific and Research organisations</u> : to enable further research on the Emerald Network; <u>Emerald Network</u> : to get further information about the Emerald sites	kartECO, LEVER, EcoContact, EKBY	Policy makers; administrative authorities (national & regional); relevant research institutions; Universities and researchers; The Emerald Network
Key Result #4	Legal and Institutional Recommendations: Recommendations for supporting the legal and institutional harmonisation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 in Moldova, on the basis of the current Emerald network of sites under the Bern Convention	
Policy makers: inc. national and regional administrative authorities of EU and under-accession counties, to understand the legal and institutional procedures for the harmonisation with EU practices; <u>Scientific and Research organisations</u> : to explore a disruptive, experimental process of policy formulation, observe and research a direct democratic process; <u>Emerald Network Viewer</u> : to access documentation papers on policy recommendation and contribute as such	ICAS, EKBY, kartECO, EcoContact, MoE-MD	Policy makers; administrative authorities (national & regional); relevant research institutions; Universities and researchers; The Emerald Network

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3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Work plan

Work plan

Provide a brief description of the overall structure of the work plan (list of work packages or graphical presentation (Pert chart or similar)).

The work in the framework of LIFE RENATA will be organized in seven (7) work packages (WPs; Figure 2). Within WP1 (Project Management), the timely and on-budget implementation of the project, including the successful delivery of deliverables and achievement of the milestones, will be ensured. The work during WP2 (Institutional and legal recommendations of the Emerald Network towards Natura 2000) will lead to a roadmap of recommendations as a dynamic framework up to 2030 for advancing the transformation of the Emerald establishment to Natura 2000 in MD. In WP3 (Emerald site review and identification advances to Natura 2000) an overview of Republic of Moldova (MD) Emerald sites and provision support for identifying areas and mapping sites under the EU Nature Directives criteria will be take place. In addition, capacity building and competence enhancement of the local stakeholders and policy makers as well as improving information and knowledge sharing using new technologies will be achieved. In WP4, guidance to relevant authorities and stakeholders related to the criteria-based assessment, for prioritizing habitat types and species in need for action, in the Emerald/Natura sites and for the preparation of action plans for the prioritized habitat types and species of Community interest as well as for appropriate management of Emerald/Natura 2000 sites including best practices and suggestions for codes and conducts will be provided. Furthermore, guidance on the practices and tools for moitoring and reporting Emerald /Natura 2000 sites will be also provided. The work within WP5 (Sustainability, Replication and Exploitation of Project Results) will deliver concrete plans that will support the project's continuation after its end and the replication of project's results by authorities of other regions in Republic of Moldova as well as other European Countries adopt Bern convention (Ukraine, Armenia etc). The communication and dissemination activities during WP6 (Awareness Raising) will ensure the active promotion of project's results into the targeted audience, including the general public, governance authorities and experts. Finally, LIFE RENATA impacts will be monitored in WP7 (Impact Monitoring and Evaluation).

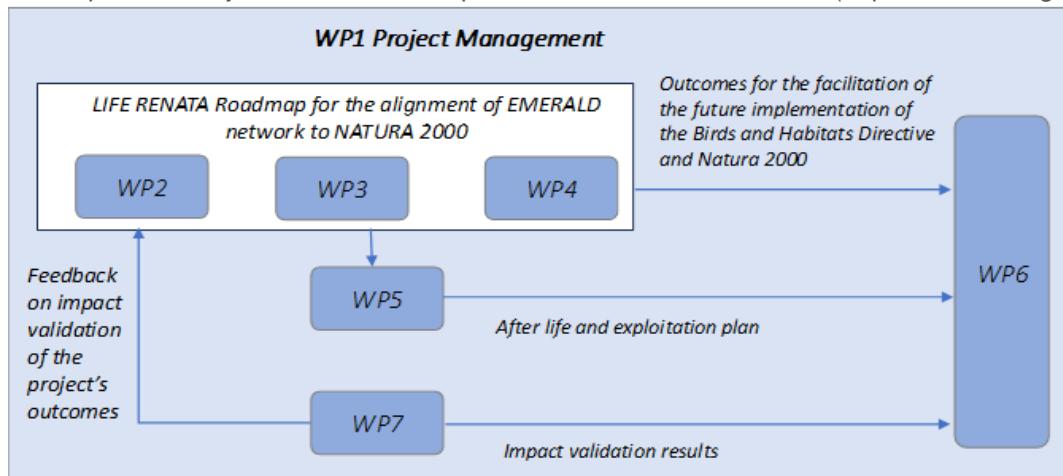


Figure 2: Schematic presentation of LIFE RENATA work packages.



3.2 Work packages and activities

Timetable

ACTIVITY	MONTHS																								
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 4	M 5	M 6	M 7	M 8	M 9	M 10	M 11	M 12	M 13	M 14	M 15	M 16	M 17	M 18	M 19	M 20	M 21	M 22	M 23	M 24	
WP1 - Project management and coordination																									
Task 1.1 - Project Management																									
Task 1.2 - Project Reporting																									
Task 1.3 - Project monitoring and evaluation																									
WP2 - Institutional and legal recommendations																									
Task 2.1 - Institutional and legislative baseline findings, barriers and risks, including site management and monitoring																									
T.2.2 - Recommendations and best practices on Institutional and legislative level																									
T.2.3 - Roadmap to transform the establishment and management of the Emerald Network to Natura 2000 in MD																									
T.2.4 - Training to enhance the capacities of competent authorities and relevant stakeholders																									
WP3 - Emerald site review and identification of advances to Natura 2000																									

3.3 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement

Identify any key stakeholders outside the consortium that are required to ensure the success of the project. How will you mobilise them to contribute to your project activities or participate in these?

Annex Letters of support to demonstrate the type and level of commitment already secured (if any).

During proposal preparation a great team effort was given to include the National Authority of protected areas in UA, but was not finalized. Nevertheless, a supportive letter (attached) indicates the Ministry of Environmental Protection in Ukraine interest for LIFE RENATA. LIFE RENATA is willing to share -apart from MD- the same values on protecting biodiversity across and beyond the EU borders with expert participants from Rewilding Ukraine, that is a national nature conservation NGO (https://rewildingeurope.com/landscapes/danube-delta/?gclid=EA1alQobChMlodmD9leHgQMVSuGyCh1uowVREAAyASAAEgJLoF_D_BwE). Rewilding Europe is fully supported by the Ministry (see letter in Annex).

In particular, International UA experts will follow on-line meetings, capacity building and trainings session and all output will be shared with them during project end. In addition, two (2) UA experts will be invited by kartECO to participate in the proposed visit meeting in protected areas in Greece. These experts will be also included in the proposed Repository Knowledge Hub who will help enrich the Hub with scientific information eg.articles and journal papers or other reports (in Ukraine language) particularly for Emerald site UA0000137, as a FUTURE transboundary eco corridor case between MD and UA. The above actions will contribute to project transferability and may constitute a good basis for enhancing joint efforts of cooperation in the future in the transboundary area of Danube.

However, lack of information, communication, and involvement of stakeholders can be a major source of conflict. Therefore, it is advised to involve stakeholders in the planning process from the outset, to achieve long-term conservation objectives and enable sustainable natural resource management (Gleason, M., McCreary, S., Miller-Henson, M., Ugoretz, J., Fox, E., Merrifield, M., ... & Hoffman, K. (2010)). Through the Projects WPs it is important to have a strong stakeholder engagement and opinion process.

In Republic of Moldova an extensive legal framework on information, participation, and decision-making process applicable in the context of all the public related activities, including and not limited to the management of the PA and development of their internal and external acts. Still, with pandemic impact, war in the neighbouring country, a new approach of consulting documents and public should be identified. It is recommended any kind of open participation and consultations on Emerald site management plans and planning to be well prepared and very carefully managed before any open discussion initiates. Based on experience, not all stakeholders will be interested in participating in all activities. Some stakeholder focused on nature values and conservation objectives (e.g., nature NGOs and some enthusiasts), will be actively involved but a majority (farmers, foresters, other landowners) which are interested more about practical actions i.e., conservation measures and about benefits that these actions will bring will be more passive or interest oriented. Therefore, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed on a dynamic basis throughout the Project and delivered separately, in this way ensuring the high-level participation of all relevant actors. A preliminary stakeholders mapping exercise is already done, identifying the key stakeholders outside the consortium that are required to ensure the success of the project.

The project's main stakeholders have been already identified and is presented in the following table:

Rank	Interest and impact axis (vertical)	Influence axis (horizontal)	Type	Project Specific
HIGH	The stakeholder will experience a high degree of impact as a result of the project Or The project is directly related to stakeholder interest or responsibilities	The stakeholder has decision making power and can determine the future development of the project in question	State authorities Businesses Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Affected communities	Ministries of Environment and Agriculture; Moldsilva Agency; State Committee on Property; affected local government institutions etc.
MEDIUM	The stakeholder will experience some degree of impact, but impacts can be managed/mitigated Or Some aspects of the Project have some relevance to the stakeholder's interests	The stakeholder can influence the scope and timing of the project but cannot determine if the investment project will be performed or not		Civil society organization (such as WWF); international agencies (such as UNDP and GIZ); private sector data providers (such as suppliers of geo-references aerial photography or satellite

				imagery); Natural Environment & Climate Change Agency of Greece (letter attached)
LOW	The stakeholder will experience very few impacts as a result of the project Or The project has limited relevance to stakeholder's interests/ responsibilities	The stakeholder has very little control on the project performance		Stakeholder from UA: Ministry of Environmental protection and natural resources of Ukraine; Rewilding Ukraine (national nature conservation NGO) (https://rewildingeurope.com/landscapes/danube-delta/?gclid=EA1aIQobChMlodmD9leHgQMVSuGyCh1uowVREAAYASAAEgJLOfD_BwE)

In an early stage of the Project a specific Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be prepared by kartECO-GR according to Gender Equality Action Plan https://www.karteco.gr/pdf/GEAP_kartECO_2022_2025_en.pdf, and the following main principles:

1. Providing meaningful information in a format and language that is readily understandable and tailored to the needs of the target stakeholder group(s)
2. Providing information in advance of consultation activities and decision-making;
3. Providing information in ways and locations that make it easy for stakeholders to access it and that are culturally appropriate;
4. Respect for local traditions, languages, timeframes, and decision-making processes;
5. Two-way dialogue that gives both sides the opportunity to exchange views and information, to listen, and to have their issues heard and addressed;
6. Inclusiveness in target groups, including ages, women and men, vulnerable and/or minority groups;
7. Incorporating, where appropriate and feasible, feedback into project or program design, and reporting back to stakeholders.

Special attention is given during project implementation to the value of gender equality. Specifically, the project has a very high women/men representation/participation ratio, especially in partners managing positions of high project impact i.e., five out of six.

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3.4 Impact monitoring and reporting

Impact monitoring, evaluation and reporting strategy (n/a for TA CAP)

Describe your overall approach to monitor and evaluate the impact of your project.

Work Package (WP) 7 is dedicated to the evaluation of the project's impact and the reporting of achievement of the impacts presented in its tasks. The latter are grouped in the following categories, Legal, operational, technical impacts following the different areas focus on the call-in order to: facilitate the future implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 in Moldova. In addition, other impacts and particular the awareness raising, and the socioeconomic impacts of the project will be monitored.

WP7 includes distinct tasks based on these categories: Task 7.1. Legal Impact; Task 7.2. Operational Impact; Task 7.3. Technical impact and Task 7.4 Other impacts. All the partners will be responsible for the monitoring and updating the performance indicators will be selected and agreed of each impact category through project lifetime and up to 3 years after the end of it. These processes will be performed through an online collaboration spreadsheet, which will be selected and developed by LEVER, the Lead Beneficiary of WP7, at the beginning of the project (month 3). Nowadays, spreadsheets serve as strategic planning and management systems that are used extensively worldwide to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organization, improve internal and external communications and monitor organization performance against strategic goals. Thus, it is also a suitable methodological framework to monitor the impact of the performance of projects. LEVER will provide guidelines for the indicators calculation and updating in the online collaboration spreadsheet.

The monitoring and update of the performance indicators for each impact category will be presented to the LIFE RENATA partnership during the progress and Steering Committee meetings, which are scheduled every six (6) months. In the project's Kick-off Meeting, the monitoring indicators and methodology for the monitoring will be discussed and agreed. LEVER as WP7 Leader, will be specifically responsible for this activity, which will be performed at month 9 and month 24 of the project. The first version of the monitoring and evaluation report

will be part of the 1st Periodic progress report (M10) and Final Progress Reports (M17).

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3.5 Communication, dissemination and visibility

Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding

Define your target audience(s). Describe the planned communication and dissemination activities to promote the action and its results and maximise the impact (to whom, which format, how many copies, etc.). Clarify how you intent to reach each target audience, and explain the choice of the dissemination channels. Describe the methods and indicators (quantitative and qualitative) to monitor and evaluate the outreach and coverage of the communication and dissemination activities and results.

Describe how the visibility of EU funding will be ensured.

The LIFE RENATA communication and dissemination activities will raise awareness of the general public, increase knowledge, skills and competencies of policymakers and stakeholders, and contribute to strengthen the partnership between MD and EU countries, sharing the same values, and setting the basis for enhancing joint efforts of cooperation and thus protecting biodiversity across and beyond the EU borders. These activities are part of an integrated strategy towards communication, dissemination, and exploitation, carefully designed and implemented in WP6: Awareness Raising. To ensure EU funding visibility, the LIFE logo and reference to the LIFE financial support will be included in all WP6 activities. Concerning the specific target groups, the LIFE RENATA Consortium will engage with several communities to fulfil its objectives and maximise the uptake of its results. The ultimate goal is to assure a diverse and integrated participation of the various communities to the project, which will not only provide target audiences with new knowledge and tools but will also fuel the project itself with wider perspectives from different sectors of the local life. Towards this direction the stakeholders' networks maintained by the partners will be exploited. The following table provides a non-exhaustive list of target groups, provided key messages, communication channels, which will be further refined during the project's implementation.

Target Groups	Means for reaching them
Key policy- and decision makers	Consultation events (WP2), Local Seminars (T.2.4, T.3.4., T4.4, T6.2), European conference (T.6.3), Project Website (T.6.1), e-newsletters (T.6.1),
General public	Project website (T.6.1), Social Media (T.6.1), Dedicated Project Pages (T.6.1), Layman's Report (T.6.1), e-newsletters (T.6.1), Infographics (T.6.1)
Local Media and Citizens Groups	Project website (T.6.1), Social Media (T.6.1), Dedicated Project Pages (T.6.1), Layman's Report (T.6.1), e-newsletters (T.6.1), Infographics (T.6.1)
Scientific and Research Community	Knowledge repository Hub and GIS database (T3.3), Scientific Publications in International Journals and Conferences (T.6.2.), European Conference (T.6.3.), Project website (T.6.1), Social Media (T.6.1), e-newsletters (T.6.1).

To monitor and evaluate the outreach and coverage of the dissemination activities and results, the following table provides engagement monitoring and evaluation indicators, which will be further enriched during project lifetime. It is worth clarifying that these indicators are exclusively communication-oriented to keep track of the project's detailed performance regarding communication activities.

Dissemination tools and activities	Indicators for monitoring and evaluating engagement
Project website, dedicated pages on beneficiaries' websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website visits where at least one page has been loaded. • Website visitors (number of people browsing the website).
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach (total number of people who see project content). • Engagement rate in social media (metrics like likes, shares, comments and retweets).
Events (Consultation meetings, Local Seminars, European Conference)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants according to participant list.
Participation in national or/and European Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Publications in conferences proceedings • Number of Presentations

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4. RESOURCES

4.1 Consortium set-up

Consortium cooperation and division of roles (if applicable)

Describe the consortium composition. How will all the partners together bring the necessary expertise?

In what way does each of the participants contribute to the project? Show that each has a valid role and adequate resources to fulfil that role.

Fill out the Participant information (annex) with more details on the participants and their project teams (key staff).

The partnership is composed by five (5) project partners (inc. the coordinator) and one (1) associated partner, involving one (1) EU Member State country (Greece) and one (1) under accession (Moldova). The organisations that compose the LIFE RENATA Consortium constitute key organisations from both countries, with cross-cutting complementary competence concerning the establishment and management of the Emerald Network of protected sites, as well as excellent track records in relevant projects.

The consortium brought together three (3) partners from Greece (EKBY, KartECO and LEVER) and two (2) from Moldova (ICAS and EcoContact), to support Moldova's Ministry of Environment (national authority responsible for the protection of the biodiversity and Associated partner) in implementing the Birds and Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 on the basis of its current Emerald network of sites under the Bern Convention.

The consortium is fully committed to work towards the successful implementation of the foreseen project activities and it's well balanced in terms of partner's profiles. Two (2) research institutions, one (1) in Greece (EKBY) and one (1) in Moldova (ICAS) aim at exchanging and transferring their scientific and technological knowledge and experiences, providing the state-of-the-art regarding the institutional and legislative baseline findings, barriers and risks on Emerald network establishment, including site management and monitoring in GR and MD. More specifically, EKBY has extensive experience in the implementation of EU legislation and policies, including the Habitats and Birds directives, as it was involved in the establishment of the Natura 2000 Network in Greece. Same, ICAS subordinated to the Ministry of Environment is an expert institution in forest management planning, inventory of forest lands, forest economy as well as scientific research in Moldova. It is also the leading institution in developing strategies, policies, research and management programs, in producing legislative and regulatory documentation and training materials for the forestry sector.

ICAS acts officially on behalf of the Ministry of Environment for the implementation of EU projects, consequently and for LIFE RENATA. In particular, the Ministry of Environment implements the projects through the subordinated institutions as well, through the National Office for the Implementation of the Environmental Projects – entity created by the Ministry of Environment. For the current assignment, Ministry of Environment appointed ICAS (Institute of Forest Research and Development) as the central authority for the implementation of the project. A letter of confirmation from the Ministry appointing the ICAS as the competent organization that has the expertise and capacity to implement the activities related to this proposal in Moldova is annexed.

The project involves also two (2) SMEs (kartECO and LEVER, GR) and one (1) NGO (EcoContact, MD) which have great experience in implementing EU projects and in EU policy and acquis for the conservation of species and habitats. Specifically, EcoContact and kartECO are currently project leaders in the World Bank-led activities under EU4Environment Program sub-component 4.1: Support to protect biodiversity and natural ecosystems (Emerald network) that aims to advance the establishment of the Emerald Network and management of the Emerald Sites in the Eastern Partner countries for MD and Armenia. Thus, they will eventually transfer know-how, lessons learned and challenges into the project.

Last, LEVER has significant experience in coordinating and managing European projects including the coordination of one (1) LIFE project (LIFE15 NAT/GR/001108 – LIFE AMYBEAR). LEVER's competences involve: the development and implementation of strategic planning; policy development; synergies with administrative bodies (national and regional) inc. the Greek Ministry of Environment and Energy as technical consultant in several projects; Department of Environment with highly qualified scientific staff supported by modern infrastructure.

The LIFE RENATA partners are well-established organisations and feature expertise and strong capacities relevant to the project's tasks. The project is structured based on the call's expected results and outputs in relation to each partner's competences and know-how.

LEVER will act as the coordinating beneficiary of the project (WP1). The contribution of LEVER to LIFE RENATA will be performed by two departments, the department of European projects (administrative and D&C part) and the Environmental department (technical & operational part).

ICAS and EKBY are responsible for the scientific support of the project. ICAS will provide the baseline findings (state-of-play), best practices, institutional and legislative barriers for Moldova (WP2), while EKBY will support the harmonization of the existing framework with the European one (WP4), providing assessments, guidelines and recommendations on the operational advances towards EU Habitat and Bird Directives implementation. This harmonization process will be supported by kartECO which will lead the technical part of the project and the activities of WP3 which concerns the overview of the Emerald network and transferring its know-how. All the three (3) partners will be also involved in WP5 which concern the sustainability, replication, and exploitation of the project results.

EcoContact will be involved in the background policy/institutional and technical analysis (WP3), questionnaire survey, organizing capacity building (WP4) and stakeholders' engagement activities (WP6), supporting both ICAS for the engagement of relevant administrative authorities in the projects and also LEVER, which is responsible for WP6, to increase the project's outreach in wider audience and networking in EU level.

Last, all partners will be responsible for the project's monitoring and evaluation of results and impact (WP7), regularly providing information and updates to the project's coordinator and according to the work plan

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4.2 Project management

Project management, quality assurance and monitoring of progress

Describe the management structures and decision-making mechanisms within the consortium. Explain how decisions will be taken and how regular and effective communication will be ensured.

Describe the measures and methods planned to ensure good quality, monitoring, planning and control of project implementation (including the small grants, if applicable).

The proposed management structure guarantees the proper coordination, implementation, and technical and financial reporting of the project, while favouring an effective collaboration between the beneficiaries and between the consortium and the LIFE Programme bodies.

The main elements of management structure, apart from the Coordinator, consist of:

- (a) **Project Manager (PM)**, responsible for the management, quality control and reporting to Contracting Authority
- (b) **The Project's Steering Committee (PSC)**, responsible for the overall overview, decision making and monitoring of the project, and
- (c) **Work Package (and Task) Leaders** who will coordinate the work within LIFE RENATA work packages and Tasks.

In addition, the PM will be assisted by the scientific manager (PSM), the communication manager (CM), the administrative staff of each partner as well as by the WP and Task leaders. The stakeholders will contribute to the implementation of the project through their involvement in several project tasks. Finally, the LIFE Monitoring expert will assist PM in case is needed. The above structure will be described in detail in the LIFE RENATA Management Guide, which will also contain:

o **The Project's Management Handbook** which will set quality control procedures in the implementation of the project including description of the project scheduled workplan, the responsibilities of the beneficiaries in each of the WPs.

o **The Project's Monitoring Handbook**, which will set monitoring indicators (different than the performance indicators of WP7) like milestones, expected results, progress indicators, budget per cost category and PP.

Further, an internal **Consortium Agreement (CA)** will be signed, in the framework of Task 1.1 by the legal representatives of all partners in order to assure the devotion and commitment of all partners in the project's implementation. The CA will arrange the mutual relationships, the responsibilities and obligations of each participant of project partnership. WP1 also includes six (6) progress meetings of the PSC in order to assess progress, address major challenges and plan next actions, ensuring the smooth implementation of the project.

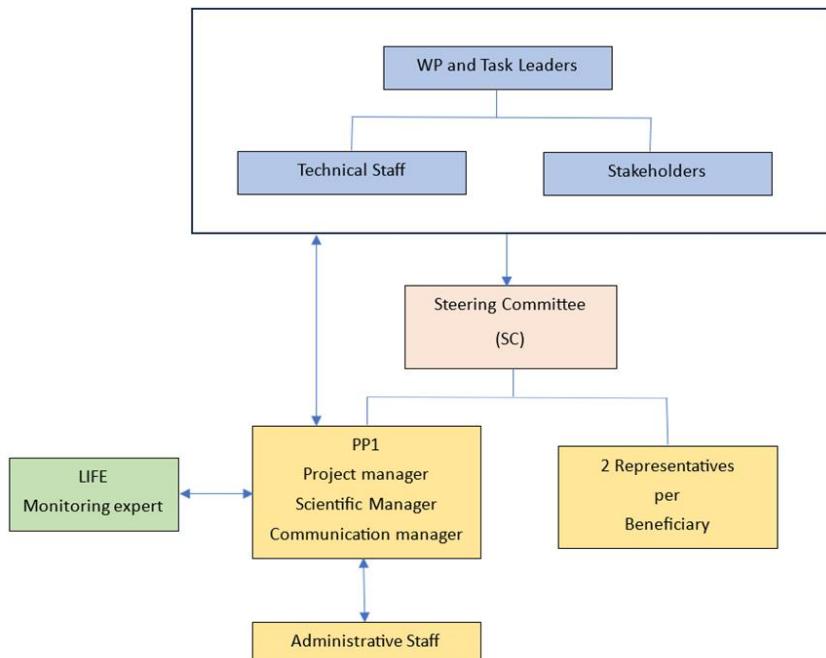


Figure 3: LIFE RENATA Management Scheme

4.3 Green management

Describe the measures proposed to reduce the environmental impact of your project, for example through the use of green procurement, environmental management systems, etc.

The project intends to think green throughout its duration and make decisions that take into account the impact of its activities on the environment. LIFE RENATA partnership will pay extra attention to ensure that the "carbon footprint" of the project will remain as low as reasonably possible.

Specific actions towards this direction will include:

- Communication among partners via emails and teleconferences
- The project meetings and events will be organized at the same time with the onsite activities need

traveling by Greek partners

- The printed material and its reproductions will be kept to the minimum number and eco-friendly Materials will be selected. E-versions will be uploaded on the website and communicated via emails to the targeted audience.
- Maps generated in shp, kmz, pdf form only.
- E-versions, available for download, of project's deliverables will stand at the project's site to save energy and minimize paper waste. At specific occasions, the minimum required information material will be printed.
- The message "Please consider the environment before printing" will appear in e-mails and website

Although project's procurement is limited, the project will support Green Public Procurement (GPP) by purchasing environmentally friendly goods, to the extent that this is feasible. More specifically, partnership will include EU and national GPP environmental criteria in the public procurement processes for the purchase of copying and graphic paper, imaging equipment and office IT equipment. During the kick-off meeting the voluntary GPP criteria developed by European Commission (EC) for several product groups will be presented. The project's Steering Committee will be responsible for defining the exact GPP that will be used for the procurements.

By this way, the reduction of environmental impacts from the implementation of the project's activities will be ensured and at the same time the two candidates (MD and UA) countries will be informed about the EU GPP criteria that can be incorporated into a public procurement procedure for goods, services or works in order to reduce the environmental impact of a purchase thus contributing to their alignment with EU policies

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4.4 Budget

Estimated budget — Resources

See detailed budget table/calculator (annex 1 to Part B).

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5. OTHER

Ethics

Not applicable

#\$ETH-ICS-EI\$# #@SEC-URI-SU@#

5.1 Security

Security

Not applicable

#\$SEC-URI-SU\$# #@DEC-LAR-DL@#

6. DECLARATIONS

Double funding

Information concerning other EU grants for this project

Please note that there is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget (except under EU Synergies actions).

YES/NO

We confirm that to our best knowledge neither the project as a whole nor any parts of it have benefitted from any other EU grant (including EU funding managed by authorities in EU Member States or other funding bodies, e.g. EU Regional Funds, EU Agricultural Funds, etc.). If NO, explain and provide details.

YES



We confirm that to our best knowledge neither the project as a whole nor any parts of it are (nor will be) submitted for any other EU grant (*including EU funding managed by authorities in EU Member States or other funding bodies, e.g. EU Regional Funds, EU Agricultural Funds, etc.*). If NO, explain and provide details.

YES

Financial support to third parties (if applicable) (n/a for TA CAP and BEST)

If in your project the maximum amount per third party will be more than the threshold amount set in the Call document, justify and explain why the higher amount is necessary in order to fulfil your project's objectives.

Not applicable

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ANNEXES

LIST OF ANNEXES

Standard

Detailed budget table/Calculator (annex 1 to Part B) — *mandatory*

Annual activity reports (annex 3 to Part B) — *mandatory, if required in the Call document*

Special

Other annexes (annex X to Part B) — *mandatory, if required in the Call document*

Letters of Support - (a) Letter of commitment/appointment from the Ministry of Environment – MD to ICAS for the implementation of LIFE RENATA; (b) Letter of Interest from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources & Rewilding Ukraine - UA to participate as a key stakeholder to LIFE RENATA; (c) Letter of Support from Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency - GR to strengthen LIFE RENATA networking

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	07.09.2023	Initial version
2.0	23.11.2023	<p>Final version</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 3.2, clarifications and additional information have been provided on the Roadmap (T.2.3) and Management Plans (T.4.2) • In WP1, the Associated Partner was included in the Project Steering Committee. • Part of the Project effort foreseen for T.2.3 and T.4.2 has been transferred to WP3, in demanding tasks • Part of Personnel cost for KartECO has been moved to SME owners • The item under the Subcontracting cost category for beneficiary ICAS has been moved to the “other goods, works and Services” cost category • A lumpsum amount for beneficiary ICAS has been reallocated from ‘Other goods, works and services’ to ‘Travel & subsistence’ and ‘Other goods, works and services’ cost category



Detailed Budget Table

[LIFE RENATA]

Important:

You may add rows but no additional tabs. This may result in your proposal being considered inadmissible.
 Please ensure that the file can be printed on a format of 1 page wide (number of pages depending on the number of participants).
 Please make sure that the figures in this table are consistent with the total budget provided in part A section 3 of the application.
 In case of inconsistencies, part A will prevail.

Staff effort allocation

Fill in the effort per work package and Beneficiary/Affiliated Entity.

Please indicate the number of person-months over the whole duration of the planned work.

Adapt the columns to the number of work packages in your proposal.

Identify the work-package leader for each work package by showing the relevant person-month figure in bold.

Participant Number/Short Name	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7	Total
1. LEVER	20	1	5	4	8	9	8	55
2. ICAS	6	15	21	12	9	5	4	72
3. EKBY	4	9	16	23	7	5	4	68
4. kartECO	4	9	18	6	5	4	4	50
5. ECOCONTACT	3	9	7	4	4	4	4	35
6.								0
7.								0
8.								0
9.								0
10.								0
Total person-months	37	43	67	49	33	27	24	280

Personnel costs

Present your estimated "Personnel costs" split into 3 categories as per the table below. If you do not have any personnel costs falling under "A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries" or "A.5 Volunteers", all personnel costs should be budgeted under "A1. Employees (or equivalent); A2. Natural persons under direct contract and A3. Seconded Persons".

For A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries: please note that as per Annex 2a of the LIFE General Model Grant Agreement (MGA), a unit cost is applied to this cost category. The units are the days spent working on the action (rounded up to the nearest half-day) and the amount per unit (daily rate) is calculated according to the following formula: (EUR 5 080 / 18 days = EUR 282,22 per day) multiplied by (country-specific correction coefficient of the country where the beneficiary is established)

Note that the country specific correction coefficient to use is the one applied for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). Yearly rates are published in the Horizon Europe Work Programme – Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions under the funding and tender portal Reference Documents (work programme and call documents section), available at <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/reference-documents;programCode=HORIZON>.

For A.5 Volunteer Costs: a unit cost is also applied to this cost category. The units are the days spent working on the action (rounded up to the nearest half-day) and the amount per unit (daily rate) is a country specific rate of the country where the beneficiary is established. Country specific rates to apply can be found in the LIFE MGA on pages 83 & 84.

Participant Number/Short Name	Country	Number of person months (staff effort per beneficiary)	Average monthly salary rate	A1. Employees (or equivalent); A2. Natural persons under direct contract and A3. Seconded Persons (costs)	A.4 SME owners and natural person (sole trader) beneficiaries (Unit costs in €)	Subtotal personnel costs without volunteers (A1+A2+A3+A4) - must be the same as in part A section 3	A.5 Volunteers (Unit costs) must be the same as in part A section 3	Total Personnel costs
1. LEVER	GR	55	3.000,00	165.000,00		165.000,00		165.000,00
2. ICAS	MD	72	1.500,00	108.000,00		108.000,00		108.000,00
3. EKBY	GR	68	2.720,00	184.960,00		184.960,00		184.960,00
4. KartECO	GR	50	3.299,99 €	98.676,00	66.323,52 €	164.999,52 €		164.999,52
5. ECOCONTACT	MD	35	2.000,00	70.000,00		70.000,00		70.000,00
6.		0	#ΔΙΑΙΡ/0!			0,00		0,00
7.		0	#ΔΙΑΙΡ/0!			0,00		0,00
8.		0	#ΔΙΑΙΡ/0!			0,00		0,00
9.		0	#ΔΙΑΙΡ/0!			0,00		0,00
10.		0	#ΔΙΑΙΡ/0!			0,00		0,00
Total		0		626.636,00	66.323,52	692.959,52	0,00	692.959,52

Subcontracting

Give details on subcontracted action tasks (if any) and explain the reasons why (as opposed to direct implementation by the participants).

Subcontracting — Subcontracting means the implementation of action tasks, i.e. specific tasks which are part of the action and are described in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement.

Note: Subcontracting concerns the outsourcing of a part of the action to a party outside the Consortium. It is not simply about purchasing goods or services. We normally expect the participants to have sufficient operational capacity to implement the project activities themselves. Sub-contracting should therefore be exceptional.

Include only subcontracts that comply with the rules (i.e. best value for money and no conflict of interest; coordinator tasks can normally not be subcontracted).

Participant Number/Short Name	Subcontract Description	Cost (€)	WP	Justification (Why is subcontracting necessary?)



	Total estimated costs	0 €	
If subcontracting for the entire project goes beyond 30% of the total eligible costs, give specific reasons.	Insert text		

Other direct costs

Please complete the table below for each participant. If required add further tables at the end of this work sheet (one per participant).

Please ensure that sufficient details are provided in part B. For major cost items add lines below, in order to provide a detailed breakdown within one cost category.

For major items listed in the justification column, indicate the work package to which they belong.

For equipment and infrastructure, please explain if the cost represents the full cost or the depreciation.

Participant 1/LEVER (1)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	2.700 €	1st trip to Kishinev: Participation in the Kick off meeting and internal meeting (T.1.1) (4 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.200 €	2nd trip to Kishinev, Moldova: 1st meeting (T.1.1) and 1st consultation (T.2.1) event and 1st training (T2.4) (5 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.600 €	3rd trip to Kishinev, Moldova: 2nd project meeting and 1st project visit by the LIFE monitor, (T.1.1) 2nd consultation (T.2.2) and 2nd training (T.3.4) (6 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.600 €	5th trip to Kishinev, Moldova: Final event (T.6.3), Final project meeting and 2nd project visit by the LIFE monitor (T.1.1) and Seminar (T6.2) (6 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	1.000 €	Presentations of the project in relevant conferences and networking (1 trip)
Travel & subsistence	1.000 €	Kick-off LIFE projects in Brussels (1 persons, 2 days)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)	1.000 €	1 laptop to support out of office activities
Other goods, works and services	2.000 €	Organization of the 4th project meeting (T.1.1)
Other goods, works and services	3.000 €	Development and maintenance of the project website and social media
Other goods, works and services	1.000 €	Design of the Layman's report (lay-out)
Financial support to third parties		N/A
Land purchase		N/A
Total	22.100 €	

Participant 2 /ICAS (2)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	4.500 €	4th trip to Thessaloniki, Greece: 3rd project meeting ((T.1.1) and 3rd training (Greece) (T.4.4) (5 days, 3 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.000 €	Presentation of the project in relevant conferences and networking (3 trips)
Travel & subsistence	1.000 €	Kick-off LIFE projects in Brussels (1 persons, 2 days)
Travel & subsistence	7.000 €	Renting of car and fuels for field work (T3.1, T3.2, T4.1 and T5.3)
Travel & subsistence	6.000 €	Costs for field work (estimative 300 days/persons): general subsistence expenses - 1500 €; accommodation - 4500 €; (T3.1, T3.2, T4.1 and T5.3)
Travel & subsistence	4.000 €	Participation of 3 persons of the Associated partner (MoE-MD) in the 3rd project meeting (T.1.1) and the seminar in GREECE (T4.4)
Travel & subsistence	2.000 €	2 persons invited to Kick off to express its experience on Emeralds in the broad area-Synergies (T.1.1)
Travel & subsistence	4.000 €	4 international experts (2 Rewilding Ukraine and 2 EU experts to express its experience on Emeralds in the broad area-Synergies invited in Final Event) (T5.3)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)	13.000 €	Laptop (x3, 4800€) for field work, demonstration (video conferencing system/equipment: 6550€) and field equipment (laser rangefinder, x3, 1650€) etc.
Other goods, works and services	80.000 €	Local and experienced biodiversity experts on habitat types and per species group (plants, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, fish, mammals, birds) will be subcontracted by ICAS in order to be engaged and provide outputs in T.3.1 and T.3.2, T.4.1, T.5.3
Other goods, works and services	9.000 €	Organization of 4 project meetings and 2 project visits (T.1.1)
Other goods, works and services	2.000 €	Organization of 2 consultation meetings (T2.1, T2.2)
Other goods, works and services	10.000 €	Organization of the Europe Conference/final event (T6.3)
Other goods, works and services	2.600 €	Translation of outreach material and speakers - subtitles for 2 promotional videos (T6.1)
Other goods, works and services	4.000 €	Equipment and gear for field work (GPS, binocular, outfit, etc.) (T3.1, T3.2, T4.1 and T5.3)
Financial support to third parties		N/A
Land purchase		N/A
Total	152.100 €	

Participant 3/EKBY (3)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	2.700 €	1st trip to Kishinev: Participation in the Kick off meeting and internal meeting (T.1.1) (4 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.200 €	2nd trip to Kishinev, Moldova: 1st meeting (T.1.1) and 1st consultation (T.2.1) event and 1st training (T2.4) (5 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.600 €	3rd trip to Kishinev, Moldova: 2nd project meeting and 1st project visit by the LIFE monitor, (T.1.1) 2nd consultation (T.2.2) and 2nd training (T.3.4) (6 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.600 €	5th trip to Kishinev, Moldova: Final event (T.6.3), Final project meeting and 2nd project visit by the LIFE monitor (T.1.1) and Seminar (T6.2) (6 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	2.000 €	Presentations of the project in relevant conferences and networking (2 trips)
Travel & subsistence	1.000 €	Cover travel expenses for representative of NECCA (LIFE-IP 4 NATURA) to participate in training seminar (Task 4.4) and exchange the Greek experience with Moldova representatives (T.5.3).
Equipment (incl. Infrastructure)	6.060 €	1 Computer and Computer upgrades (Operating System, Office productivity suite, Hardware for workstations)

Other goods, works and services	3.500 €	Organization of the training seminar (T4.4) (catering and bus rental)
Financial support to third parties		N/A
Land purchase		N/A
Total	25.660 €	

Participant 4/kartECO (4)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	2.700 €	1st trip to Kishinev: Participation in the Kick off meeting & internal meeting (T.1.1) (4 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.200 €	2nd trip to Kishinev, Moldova: 1st meeting (T.1.1) & 1st consultation (T.2.1) event & 1st training (T2.4) (5 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.600 €	3rd trip to Kishinev, Moldova: 2nd project meeting and 1st project visit by the LIFE monitor, (T.1.1) 2nd consultation (T.2.2) & 2nd training (T.3.4) (6 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	3.600 €	5th trip to Kishinev, Moldova: Final event (T.6.3), Final project meeting and 2nd project visit by the LIFE monitor (T.1.1) and Seminar (T6.2) (6 days, 2 persons)
Travel & subsistence	1.000 €	Kick-off LIFE projects in Brussels (1 persons, 2 days)
Travel & subsistence	2.500 €	Participation of 2 persons from Rewilding Ukraine in the training seminar in Greece (T4.4)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)	2.000 €	2 laptops to support out of office activities
Financial support to third parties		N/A
Land purchase		N/A
Total	18.600 €	

Participant 5/ECOCONTACT (5)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence	4.500 €	4th trip to Thessaloniki, Greece: 3rd project meeting ((T.1.1) and 3rd training (Greece) (T.4.4) (5 days, 3 persons)
Travel & subsistence	1.000 €	Presentations of the project in relevant conferences and networking (1 trip)
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)	1.000 €	1 laptop to support out of office activities
Other goods, works and services	2.000 €	Organization of one (1) governance-related seminars (T.6.2)
Other goods, works and services	5.000 €	Organization of two training seminars (T2.4, T3.4)
Financial support to third parties		N/A
Land purchase		N/A
Total	13.500 €	

Participant Number/Short Name (6)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence		
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services		
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	0 €	

Participant Number/Short Name (7)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence		
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services		
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	0 €	

Participant Number/Short Name (8)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence		
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services		
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	0 €	

Participant Number/Short Name (9)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence		
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services		
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	0 €	

Participant Number/Short Name (10)	Cost (€)	Justification
Travel & subsistence		
Equipment (incl. infrastructure)		
Other goods, works and services		
Financial support to third parties		
Land purchase		
Total	0 €	

Proposal ID SEP-210969203	Call for Proposal LIFE-2023-PLP	Topic  Associated with document Ref. Ares(2024)484694 - 22/01/2024	Type of Action LIFE-2023-PLP-NAT-ENV	Type of Action LIFE-PJG
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LIFE Programme – Application Forms (Part C – KPI)

Horizontal KPIs for all LIFE applicants (Mandatory to report on all the KPIs of this section).

Innovation	Governance	Plans & strategies
<p>Is your project proposal developing, demonstrating and promoting innovative techniques and approaches?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Is your project proposal improving governance through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society?</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Is your project proposal implementing key plans or strategies?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p>
Catalytic effect - Financial	Catalytic effect - Spatial	Catalytic effect - Thematic
<p>Will your project trigger additional investments?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Will the results of your project be replicated beyond its intended geographical scope?</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Will the results of your project be replicated (transferred) beyond its intended thematic scope?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p>
Catalytic effect - Societal	Rio markers for climate, biodiversity and air quality	
<p>Will your project :</p> <p>a) Contribute to the development of new or existing national legislation, policies, regulations, incentives and voluntary commitments?</p> <p>b) Achieve a step-change in more effective compliance with and enforcement of Union environmental and climate legislation and/or in policy implementation?</p> <p>c) Achieve a step-change in awareness and support of environmental and climate matters?</p> <p>d) Establish a new macroregional or national model of cooperation (networking)?</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Please indicate if your proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has climate change/ biodiversity/ air quality as their primary objective Has climate change/ biodiversity/ air quality as their secondary objective and provide substantial contributions to these objectives Does not contribute significantly to climate change/ biodiversity/ air quality <p>Climate change Not contributing</p> <p>Biodiversity Primary Objective</p> <p>Air quality Not contributing</p>	

ANNEX 2**ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR THE ACTION**

Estimated eligible ¹ costs (per budget category)											Estimated EU contribution ²				
Direct costs											Indirect costs	Total costs	EU contribution to eligible costs		
A. Personnel costs			B. Subcontracting costs	C. Purchase costs			D. Other cost categories		E. Indirect costs ³	Funding rate % ⁴			Maximum EU contribution ⁵	Requested EU contribution	Maximum grant amount ⁶
A.1 Employees (or equivalent)	A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries	A.5 Volunteers	B. Subcontracting	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment	C.3 Other goods, works and services	D.1 Financial support to third parties	D.2 Land purchase	E. Indirect costs						
A.2 Natural persons under direct contract															
A.3 Seconded persons															
Forms of funding	Actual costs	Unit costs ⁷	Unit costs ⁷	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Flat-rate costs ⁸					
	a1	a3	a4	b	c1	c2	c3	d1a	d2	e = flat-rate * (a1 + a3 + b + c1 + c2 + c3 + d1a)	f = a + b + c + d + e	U	g = f * U%	h	m
1 - LEVER	165 000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15 100.00	1 000.00	6 000.00	0.00	0.00	13 097.00	200 197.00	90	180 177.30	180 177.30	180 177.30
2 - ICAS	108 000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	31 500.00	13 000.00	107 600.00	0.00	0.00	18 207.00	278 307.00	90	250 476.30	250 476.30	250 476.30
3 - EKBY	184 960.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16 100.00	6 060.00	3 500.00	0.00	0.00	14 743.40	225 363.40	90	202 827.06	202 827.06	202 827.06
4 - kartECO	98 676.00	66 323.52	0.00	0.00	16 600.00	2 000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12 851.97	196 451.49	90	176 806.34	176 806.34	176 806.34
5 - EcoContact	70 000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5 500.00	1 000.00	7 000.00	0.00	0.00	5 845.00	89 345.00	90	80 410.50	80 410.50	80 410.50
6 - MoE-MD															
Σ consortium	626 636.00	66 323.52	0.00	0.00	84 800.00	23 060.00	124 100.00	0.00	0.00	64 744.37	989 663.89		890 697.50	890 697.50	890 697.50

¹ See Article 6 for the eligibility conditions. All amounts must be expressed in EUR (see Article 21 for the conversion rules).² The consortium remains free to decide on a different internal distribution of the EU funding (via the consortium agreement; see Article 7).³ Indirect costs already covered by an operating grant (received under any EU funding programme) are ineligible (see Article 6.3). Therefore, a beneficiary/affiliated entity that receives an operating grant during the action duration cannot declare indirect costs for the year(s)/reporting period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action. This requires specific accounting tools. Please immediately contact us via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal for details.⁴ See Data Sheet for the funding rate(s).⁵ This is the theoretical amount of the EU contribution to costs, if the reimbursement rate is applied to all the budgeted costs. This theoretical amount is then capped by the 'maximum grant amount'.⁶ The 'maximum grant amount' is the maximum grant amount decided by the EU. It normally corresponds to the requested grant, but may be lower.⁷ See Annex 2a 'Additional information on the estimated budget' for the details (units, cost per unit).⁸ See Data Sheet for the flat-rate.

ANNEX 2a**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON UNIT COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS****SME owners/natural person beneficiaries without salary**

See [Additional information on unit costs and contributions \(Annex 2a and 2b\)](#)

Volunteers

See [Additional information on unit costs and contributions \(Annex 2a and 2b\)](#)

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

INTreprinderEA DE STAT INSTITUTUL DE CERCETARI SI AMENAJARI SILVICE (ICAS), PIC 932605822, established in CALEA IESILOR 69, CHISINAU 2069, Moldova,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101148675 — LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA ('the Agreement')

between LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTXHS ANONIMH ETERIA (LEVER) and the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

MOUSEIO GOULANDRI FYSIKIS ISTORIAS (EKBY), PIC 988990079, established in LEVIDOU 13, ATHINA 14562, Greece,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101148675 — LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA ('the Agreement')

between LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTIKHS ANONIMH ETERIA (LEVER) and the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

KARTERIS APOSTOLOS KARTERIS MARIN OE (kartECO), PIC 962334479, established in AGIAS ANASTASIAS AND LAERTOU, THESSALONIKI 57001, Greece,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101148675 — LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA ('the Agreement')

between LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTXHS ANONIMH ETERIA (LEVER) and the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

ASOCIAȚIA OBSTEASCA ECOCONTACT (EcoContact), PIC 923380249, established in 18/2 CUZA VODA STR, CHISINAU 2060, Moldova,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101148675 — LIFE23-PRE-EL-LIFE RENATA ('the Agreement')

between LEVER SYMVOULI ANAPTIIXHS ANONIMH ETERIA (LEVER) and the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 4 LIFE MGA — MULTI + MONO

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR [PARTICIPANT NAME] FOR REPORTING PERIOD [NUMBER]

Eligible ¹ costs (per budget category)												EU contribution ²			Revenues
Direct costs												Indirect costs	EU contribution to eligible costs		Total requested EU contribution
A. Personnel costs			B. Subcontracting costs		C. Purchase costs			D. Other cost categories		E. Indirect costs ²	Total costs	Funding rate % ³	Maximum EU contribution ⁴	Requested EU contribution	Income generated by the action
A.1 Employees (or equivalent)	A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries	A.5 Volunteers	B. Subcontracting	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment	C.3 Other goods, works and services	D.X Financial support to third parties	D.2 Land purchase	E. Indirect costs						
A.2 Natural persons under direct contract															
A.3 Seconded persons															
Forms of funding	Actual costs	Unit costs ⁵	Unit costs ⁵	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Flat-rate costs ⁶					
	a1	a3	a4	b	c1	c2	c3	d1a	d2	$e = \text{flat-rate} * (a1 + a3 + b + c1 + c2 + c3 + d1a)$	$f = a + b + c + d + e$	U	$g = f * U\%$	h	m
XX — [short name beneficiary/affiliated entity]															

The beneficiary/affiliated entity hereby confirms that:

The information provided is complete, reliable and true.

The costs and contributions declared are eligible (see Article 6).

The costs and contributions can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Articles 19, 20 and 25).

For the last reporting period: that all the revenues have been declared (see Article 22).

① Please declare all eligible costs and contributions, even if they exceed the amounts indicated in the estimated budget (see Annex 2). Only amounts that were declared in your individual financial statements can be taken into account later on, in order to replace costs/contributions that are found to be ineligible.

¹ See Article 6 for the eligibility conditions. All amounts must be expressed in EUR (see Article 21 for the conversion rules).² If you have also received an EU operating grant during this reporting period, you cannot claim indirect costs - unless you can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action. This requires specific accounting tools. Please contact us immediately via the Funding & Tenders Portal for details.³ See Data Sheet for the reimbursement rate(s).⁴ This is the *theoretical* amount of EU contribution to costs that the system calculates automatically (by multiplying the reimbursement rates by the costs declared). The amount you request (in the column 'requested EU contribution') may be less.⁵ See Annex 2a 'Additional information on the estimated budget' for the details (units, cost per unit).⁶ See Data Sheet for the flat-rate.

ANNEX 5

SPECIFIC RULES

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS — ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE (— ARTICLE 16)

Rights of use of the granting authority on results for information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes

The granting authority also has the right to exploit non-sensitive results of the action for information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes, using any of the following modes:

- **use for its own purposes** (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)
- **distribution to the public** in hard copies, in electronic or digital format, on the internet including social networks, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file
- **editing or redrafting** (including shortening, summarising, changing, correcting, cutting, inserting elements (e.g. meta-data, legends or other graphic, visual, audio or text elements extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts or use in a compilation
- **translation** (including inserting subtitles/dubbing) in all official languages of EU
- **storage** in paper, electronic or other form
- **archiving** in line with applicable document-management rules
- the right to authorise **third parties** to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties, including if there is licensed background, any of the rights or modes of exploitation set out in this provision
- **processing**, analysing, aggregating the results and **producing derivative works**
- **disseminating** the results in widely accessible databases or indexes (such as through ‘open access’ or ‘open data’ portals or similar repositories, whether free of charge or not).

The beneficiaries must ensure these rights of use for the whole duration they are protected by industrial or intellectual property rights.

If results are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they

comply with their obligations under this Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY (— ARTICLE 17)

Communication and dissemination plan

The beneficiaries must provide a detailed communication and dissemination plan, setting out the objectives, key messaging, target audiences, communication channels, social media plan, planned budget and relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

Additional communication and dissemination activities

The beneficiaries must engage in the following additional communication and dissemination activities:

- **present the project** (including project summary, coordinator contact details, list of participants, European flag and funding statement and special logo and project results) on the beneficiaries' **websites or social media accounts**
- for actions involving equipment, infrastructure or works, display as soon as the work on the action starts a **printed or electronic sign** of appropriate size, with European flag and funding statement and special logo
- upload the public **project results** to the LIFE Project Results platform, available through the Funding & Tenders Portal .

Special logos

Communication activities and infrastructure, equipment or major results funded by the grant must moreover display the following logo:

- the LIFE Programme logo



and

- for projects in Natura 2000 sites or contributing to the integrity of Natura 2020 network: the Natura 2000 logo



SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION (— ARTICLE 18)

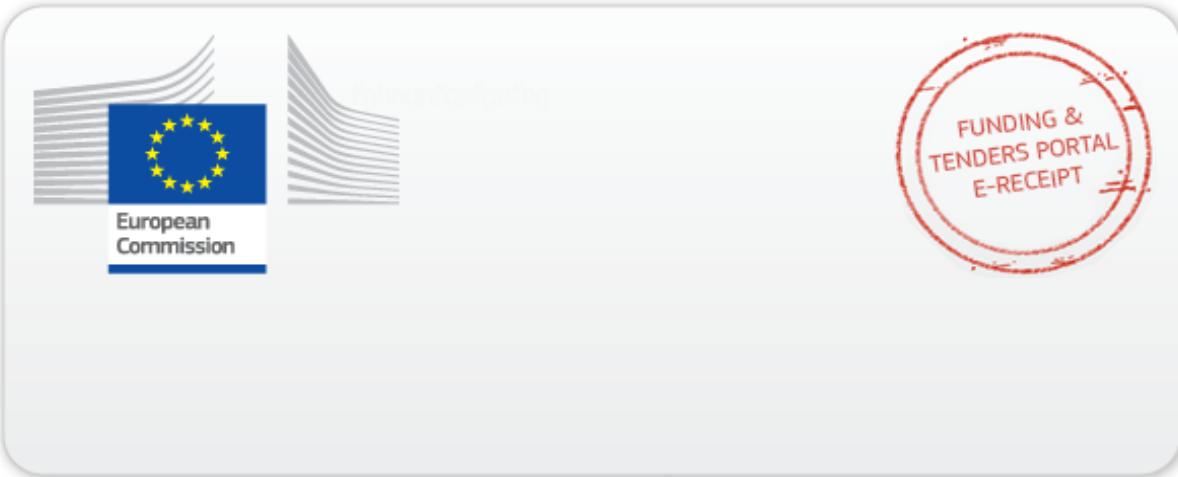
Durability

Unless exempted by the granting authority, beneficiaries of Standard Action Projects, Strategic Nature Projects and Strategic Integrated Projects must commit to continue to use and maintain after the end of the action equipment bought and eligible at full costs, for activities pursuing the action's objectives. Such equipment must be used for these purposes — for at least five years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) or until the end of its economic lifespan (i.e. until it has been fully depreciated) — whichever is earlier.

Specific rules for blending operations

When implementing blending operations, the beneficiaries acknowledge and accept that:

- the grant depends on the approved financing from the Implementing Partner and/or public or private investors for the project
- they must inform the granting authority both about the approval for financing and the financial close — within 15 days
- the payment deadline for the first prefinancing is automatically suspended until the granting authority is informed about the approval for financing
- both actions will be managed and monitored in parallel and in close coordination with the Implementing Partner, in particular:
 - all information, data and documents (including the due diligence by the Implementing Partner and the signed agreement) may be exchanged and may be relied on for the management of the other action (if needed)
 - issues in one action may impact the other (e.g. suspension or termination in one action may lead to suspension also of the other action; termination of the grant will normally suspend and exit from further financing and vice versa, etc.)
- the granting authority may disclose confidential information also to the Implementing Partner.



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