

## ANNEX V

### Template for programmes supported from the ERDF (Investment for jobs and growth goal), ESF+, the Cohesion Fund, the JTF and the EMFAF – Article 21(3)

<b>CCI</b>	
<b>Title in EN</b>	[255] <sup>1</sup> PROGRAMME ENVIRONMENT 2021-2027
<b>Title in national language(s)</b>	[255] ПРОГРАМА ОКОЛИНА СРЕДА 2021-2027
<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>First year</b>	[4] 2021
<b>Last year</b>	[4] 2027
<b>Eligible from</b>	01.01.2021
<b>Eligible until</b>	31.12.2029
<b>Commission decision number</b>	
<b>Commission decision date</b>	
<b>Member State amending decision number</b>	
<b>Member State amending decision entry into force date</b>	
<b>Non substantial transfer (Article 24(5)CPR)</b>	Yes/No
<b>NUTS regions covered by the programme (not applicable to the EMFAF)</b>	North-Western Northern Central North-Eastern South-Eastern Southern Central South-Western
<b>Fund(s) concerned</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ERDF
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cohesion Fund
	<input type="checkbox"/> ESF+
	<input type="checkbox"/> JTF
	<input type="checkbox"/> EMFAF
<b>Programme</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> under Investment for jobs and growth goal for the outermost regions only

#### 1. Programme strategy: main development challenges and policy responses<sup>2</sup>

Reference: points (a)(i) to (viii) and point (a)(x) of Article 22(3) and point (b) of Article 22(3)

<sup>1</sup> Numbers in square brackets refer to number of characters without spaces.

<sup>2</sup> For programmes limited to supporting the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation, the description of the programme strategy does not need to relate to challenges referred to in points (a)(i), (ii) and (vi) of Article 22(3) CPR.

*Text field [30 000]*

## **GENERAL INFORMATION AND HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES**

Programme “Environment” (PE) is a horizontal tool for implementation of environmental and climate change policies. This predetermines the observation of the horizontal principles set out in Art. 3 of the Treaty on European Union and Art. 10 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, taking into account the EU Charter of fundamental rights – observation of disabled person rights and provision of access, eliminating inequalities and promoting gender equality, as well as opposition to discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, color, ethnic, religion or belief, disability age or sexual orientation. The sectoral scope of the programme predefines its main objective – to preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment as set in Art. 11 and Art. 191, para. 1 of TFEU (respecting the “polluter pays” principle). The main objectives of the PE 2021-2027 correspond to the ones of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF) related to climate change and disaster risk, water, circular economy, biodiversity and reducing air pollution and fully respect the EU and the national legislation on environment, resource and energy efficiency, circular economy. They are in line with the UN goal on promoting sustainable development and climate action. During the Programme implementation the strategic use of public procurement to support Policy Objectives (including professionalization efforts to address capacity gaps) will be promoted. Beneficiaries should be encouraged to use more quality-related and lifecycle cost criteria, if possible. When feasible, environmental and social considerations, as well as innovation incentives, may be incorporated into public procurement procedures. Also, opportunities shall be sought for providing support to vulnerable groups, e.g. when selecting final recipients of support for replacement of solid fuel heating appliances, priority will be given to energy-poor households and other representatives of vulnerable groups. The EU's review of the suitability of the air quality directives (Directives 2004/107/EC and 2008/50/EC) finds that air pollution also leads to social costs in terms of inequalities and social sustainability. Therefore, measures to reduce air pollution and comply with air quality directives can have a positive effect on improving social sustainability.

## **SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CHALLENGES**

### **I. Overall economic conditions, lessons learnt and investment needs based on challenges identified in EU and national recommendations**

In the last 10 years Bulgaria remains macroeconomically stable. The Cohesion Policy has a significant influence on the EU economy and, in particular, on Bulgarian, leading to cumulated long-term investment effects. It is foreseen that the EU-funded investments will continue to stimulate economic growth<sup>3</sup>. The increase in public investments clearly shows relation between European programmes and country's progress in the social and economic sphere.

After joining EU, Bulgaria increases its expenditures for environmental protection and achieves improvement of its ecological indexes, but there are still some notable challenges. As a result of the experience gained in the previous programming periods, taking into account the specific recommendations in the Annual Country Report Bulgaria 2019 and 2020, five areas have been identified for financing by the PE for the period 2021 - 2027, focused on Policy Objective 2 of the Common Provisions Regulation (EU) 2021/1060. The envisaged investments shall contribute to achieve the national priorities defined in the strategic framework document National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030 (NDP Bulgaria 2030), in particular priorities “Circular and Low-Carbon Economy” and “Clean Air and Biodiversity” under development axis 2 “Green and Sustainable

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<sup>3</sup> Seventh Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion,  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/bg/information/cohesion-report/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/bg/information/cohesion-report/)

Bulgaria” and priority “Local Development” under development axis 3 “Connected and Integrated Bulgaria”.

## II. Water

### Lessons learnt, challenges, investment needs

Bulgaria has not yet achieved compliance with the requirements of Directive 91/271/EEC and Directive 98/83/EC [Directive (EU) 2020/2184], as stipulated in the National WSS Investment Plan (NIP) – an enabling condition for the water supply and sewerage (WSS) sector. Despite the centralized **water supply** systems cover 99,4% of the population and provide drinking water with relatively good quality, in the last years there are deviations in some indicators such as Chromium, Manganese, Magnesium, Iron, etc. Usually, this is due to the highly depreciated pipes and frequent breakdowns, which often leads also to water regimes. The average age of the pipes is 36 years and more than 50% of the water is “non-revenue generating”. The NIP outlines the investments to guarantee that the water quality and the use of resources in the water supply meet the requirements of Directive (EU) 2020/2184.

Based on the prioritisations within the Regional Feasibility Studies (RFSs), measures will be implemented for construction of drinking water treatment plants or construction/connection with new water sources and design and construction of sanitary and security zones for these water sources to address the disparities in the quality of drinking water.

Regarding the **sewerage and wastewater treatment** plants the population’s connectivity is increasing along with improvement of the treatment technologies. However, the infrastructure investment needs in the sector remain high, considering the requirements of the EU *acquis*. Regarding the compliance with Directive 91/271/EEC, the NIP identifies 332 agglomerations in the country (99 agglomerations of more than 10 000 P.E.). 253 agglomerations of them are on the territory of a consolidated region (75 above 10 000 P.E. in a total of 22 consolidated regions plus 3 in Sofia). The non-consolidated regions are 6 with 79 agglomerations (21 above 10 000 P.E.). It has to be taken into account that the development of RFSs (only for territories of consolidated WSS regions) results in revision of the size and scope of some agglomerations. This results in updating the number of agglomerations, hence the data in the NIP differ from those under the Reporting on UWWD and in OPE 2014-2020 text.

Despite the significant needs outlined in the NIP, that exceed the available financing, the compliance with both Directives grows as a result of the newly constructed infrastructure and better data reporting and assessment in the RFSs. The financial needs for the WSS sector estimated in the NIP (Table 6) are at a total of EUR 7 bln, of which EUR 2.88 bln for agglomerations above 10 000 PE and EUR 2.96 bln for agglomerations between 2 000 and 10 000 P.E. Under OPE 2014-2020 around EUR 1 bln are focused to support agglomerations above 10 000 P.E. in 16 consolidated regions. The lessons learnt from the programming period 2014-2020 show that the transition to the investments based on regional approach is challenging. The main difficulties are related to the shift of the beneficiaries from municipalities to the Regional Water Operators (RWOs) considering the lack of capacity of the RWOs in project management but also the bankability of the RWOs and the fact that the price of the WSS services have to respect the threshold of social affordability.

The investments planned to be supported in the period 2021-2027 shall upgrade the results from 2014-2020 period, as PE shall continue supporting the most significant needs of high priority in the WSS sector based on the NIP and the RFSs. Respecting the regional approach, a draft Law on WSS has been proposed, which makes the consolidation of WSS operators mandatory for all districts in the country.

According to the second River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) the ecological status is good or very good in 46% of all assessed water bodies. Based on that, it is concluded that Bulgaria has to intervene additionally in order to achieve the goals for good water status in accordance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). In this regard, it is necessary to continue

the efforts to improve the condition of water bodies by upgrading the RBMPs and implementing the outlined measures.

### **Contribution to objectives of strategic documents and macro-regional strategies**

The envisaged investments under priority 1 “Water” will ensure consistency with and shall contribute to achieve national objectives under priority 9 “Local development” of the NDP Bulgaria 2030 and to the UNO objective “Insuring accessible and sustainable management of waters and wastewater networks for everyone”.

The planned eligible measures contribute to achieving the strategic objective 2 “Stimulating urban development”, Pillar 2 “Protecting the Environment”, Priority Area 4 “Water quality” of the revised Action Plan to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (as per Staff working document of the EC from 06.04.2020) through investments in infrastructure for collection, disposal and wastewater treatment, protection of water resources and provision of water supply. In addition, the support under the priority has a contribution to the EU Action Plan: Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil through support for the use of the objectives for the good status of water bodies, incl. and the coastal waters in the implementation of the objectives of the RBMP and the Maritime Strategy of Bulgaria. With regard to "Climate Neutrality", actions for the efficient use of water resources will be supported, incl. through support for drought management.

## **III. Waste**

### **Lessons learnt, challenges, investment needs**

Significant results have been achieved, but waste management continues to be a challenge (*Country Report Bulgaria 2020*). The generated domestic waste shows a lasting reduction tendency and for the 2008-2018 period is about 36% (*National Waste Management Plan (NWMP) 2021-2028*, an enabling condition for 2021-2027). The share of treated domestic waste increases (2017, 99.7%) and the relative share of landfilled waste has decreased significantly, but in 2017 (61.8%) remains higher than the EU average (23.5%). The share of the population covered by waste collection system is 99.8% and includes 4 698 settlements (NSI, 2018). The household waste recycling level for 2017 is 34.6%, still behind the EU values of 46.5% (Eurostat).

OPE is the leading source for financing public infrastructure in household waste management. During the period 2007-2013, investment projects are supported in 20 Regional Waste Management Associations (RWMA), including: landfill cells with a total capacity of over 6 mln tons; installations for pre-treatment of mixed domestic waste with a total capacity of over 350 000 tons/year; green waste composting installations with a total capacity of over 200,000 tons/year; anaerobic digestion installations with a total capacity of 20 000 tonnes/year and others. During the programming period 2014-2020, projects for household waste management of 24 RWMA are financed, including: 16 installations for pre-treatment; 38 green and biodegradable waste composting instalations and 3 anaerobic digestion instalations and recultivation of 87 old landfills.

The built infrastructure does not have sufficient capacity to reach the targets for recycling and recovery of the estimated quantities of household waste, in accordance with the new EU targets (NWMP 2021-2028). That's why the priority for funding in the period 2021-2027 is given to develop and upgrade household waste management systems at a regional level, in particular focused at reuse, separate waste collection and recycling in order to achieve the 2030 objectives. The investments in regional systems will be directed to the RWMA and municipalities with identified needs in the NWMP 2021-2028 under Annex No 8 for separate waste collection and recycling of biodegradable waste, and those related to centers for separate waste collection and reuse – to all municipalities. More efforts are needed to raise public awareness and increase the knowledge as key actions to improve waste management.

The support for the landfills recultivation will be provided in order to reduce the risk for environmental pollution and human health. Despite most of the construction waste has a high potential for recycling and recovery and different recycling technologies are available, there is not

enough capacity to recycle this type of waste (NWMP 2021-2028). Achieving higher levels of recycling and recovery requires significant investments and efforts on the part of Bulgarian companies (Strategy for the Transition to a Circular Economy 2021-2027).

The investments in 2021-2027 period will be focused on interventions to stimulate the transition to a circular economy. Support for demonstration projects under OPE 2014-2020 contributes in this direction, including by raising public awareness of the waste management hierarchy, by generating “good practices” and ideas.

#### **Contribution to objectives of strategic documents**

The investments are based on and contribute to the objectives of the National Waste Management Plan 2021-2028 and the Strategy and Action Plan for the Transition to a Circular Economy 2021-2027. The recommendations under other strategic documents as the Country Reports Bulgaria 2019 and 2020, the Early Warning Report for Bulgaria 2018, the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030, the Strategy for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises 2021-2027, as well as infringement procedures that have started against Bulgaria are also considered.

### **IV. Biodiversity**

#### **Lessons learnt, challenges, investment needs**

In sector **biodiversity and Natura 2000** the efforts continue to be focused on biodiversity conservation, maintenance and restoration. The process of establishing Natura 2000 ecological network began in 2002 through the Biological Diversity Act. The act also introduces the requirements of both European environmental Directives. From 2002 to 2006, a national list of Natura 2000 sites was elaborated through the implementation of several projects. In the period 2008-2019, the national list was supplemented and expanded a couple of times. The contribution of the country to the pan-European network is 4.15 mln ha protected sites (3.87 mln ha of them are terrestrial and 2 821.35 km<sup>2</sup> are marine territory). Subject to conservation in Natura 2000 in Bulgaria are 92 types of habitats and 121 species, other than birds – including 28 priority habitats and 8 priority species, as well as 239 birds.

In the period 2007-2013, support from the ESIF is dedicated to the implementation of projects in the protected territories and sites: mapping and determining the nature conservation status of natural habitats and species - phase I, which provides that the country presents its first report under Art. 17 of the Habitats Directive and Art. 12 of the Birds Directive; development and introduction of an information system for Natura 2000 network of protected sites, containing all the available information on the status of species and habitats; National Information and Communication Strategy for Natura 2000 network, where priority topics, stakeholders and communication channels are defined. In 2014-2020 investments (nearly EUR 60 mln.) are fully focused on Natura 2000 network. Measures are supported related to the completion of the process of establishing the network in the marine environment, as well as a number of conservation measures for wetlands, bird species, natural habitats. Protected sites management approach has been developed which is among the most important measures identified in the National Prioritization Action Framework (NPAF) 2014-2020 as well as in the EC Position paper for 2014-2020 programming period. A delay has been generated in the process of its implementation due to the need to reach a consensus among all stakeholders. By Decision № 147/05.03.2020 the Council of Ministers approved the amendments to the Biodiversity Act proposing the establishment of a national management body that shall prepare the methodological guidelines, instructions, manuals, procedures and shall summarize the available information for the purposes of reporting under Art. 12 and Art. 17 of both Directives, and regional bodies responsible for the elaboration of territorial management plans with the necessary conservation measures on the sites. As of June 2022, the proposal for amendment of the Biodiversity Act has not been approved yet by the National Assembly. The management approach has been elaborated under OPE 2014-2020, the reform will be implemented under the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) and PE 2021-2027 will finance the development of management plans, including the necessary active communication with stakeholders to ensure

understanding and continuity. The main objective is to ensure implementation of conservation measures in order to attain better conservation status of species and habitats. In this regard, in 2021-2027 support will be provided for Natura 2000 to achieve compliance with Habitats Directive and Birds Directive. Support is also envisaged outside the network, as measures will correspond to the National Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and to other documents at national level.

The challenges in the biodiversity protection are related to different factors, e.g. high number of private lands within the Natura 2000 network, many of them depopulated, protected sites in hardly accessible areas, limited EU coverage of some species and habitats, resulting in moderate expertise, notably in Bulgaria.

### **Contribution to objectives of strategic documents**

The planned investments are based on the analyses, conclusions and measures determined within the National Prioritization Action Framework for the period 2021-2027. However, they are also in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the National Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the management plans for protected areas and sites and action plans, thus contributing to achieve the objectives of Development axis 2 “Green and Sustainable Bulgaria”, priority 5 “Clean Air and Biodiversity” of NDP Bulgaria 2030.

The planned eligible measures contribute also to strategic objective 2 “Stimulating urban development”, Pillar 2 “Protecting the Environment”, Priority Area 6 “Biodiversity and landscapes, quality of air and soils” of the revised Action Plan to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (as per Staff working document of the EC from 06.04.2020).

Support under the priority has a direct contribution to the current Maritime Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria to achieve and maintain a good state of the marine environment, especially with regard to protection of species and habitats in Black Sea aquatoria.

## **V. Risk and climate change**

### **Lessons learnt, challenges, investment needs**

As far as disaster **risk and climate change adaptation** are concerned, floods remain one of the most significant nature disasters in Bulgaria. It is reported that they have caused major damages, followed by landslides, droughts and wildfires, earthquakes (NSI, 2018). Disaster damages indicate that society is still not protected and prepared enough to stand such risks. This leads to the conclusion, as also set in the Country Report Bulgaria 2019, that support should be provided for establishment of a comprehensive disaster risk management system oriented rather towards preventing and averting such risks. The increased frequency of extreme climate events affects socio-economic and natural systems. Key horizontal problem is the vulnerability to extreme weather events and the need to develop resilience and preparedness through a comprehensive management and disaster risk prevention.

OPE 2014-2020 funding (over EUR 55 mln.) supports actions for population prevention, preparedness, protection and response: construction of 6 regional centers to raise population's preparedness for an adequate response, development of unified model for capacity building to respond in case of floods and subsequent crises, establishment of a pilot of a National Real Time Water Management System – for Iskar river, complemented with a system integrating local systems for early warning and announcement, fortification of more than 80 ha of landslides.

In order to fulfil the WFD and Directive 2007/60/EC requirements, Bulgaria implements a long-term planning to reduce the flood risk by developing Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs), which together with the National Disaster Risk Management Plan (NDRMP, an enabling condition), base the selection of the investment needs to be supported by the programme. The NDRMP states that floods pose a significant recurrent risk with projected climate change impact until 2050 assessed as “+Up (likely)”. Still, the analyses related to the development of the FRMPs for the period 2022-2027 show low percentage of performance of the flood protection measures that are prioritized in the FRMPs 2016-2021. In this regard, investments in PE 2021-2027 continue

to be directed towards the implementation of the FRMPs measures due to the needs related to flood risk prevention.

Adverse geodynamic processes are major geological hazard, as per the NDRMP – in general they remain a challenge and dealing with it shall be targeted in 2021-2027. The main objectives are to ensure remote monitoring and to perform subsequent interventions on site for their fortification, incl. along the road network, where such risks occur as a threat to the population.

Wildfires remain a regular threat to the national environment, assessed in the NDRMP with projected climate change impact “++Up (very likely)”. In 2021 fire-prone season Bulgaria experienced severe wild fires (228 until August 2021), which caused the loss of thousands of hectares of forests, biodiversity and even human lives. As a consequence of the ongoing process of climate change the analysis made in the Report on the national disaster risk profile of the country (part of the NDRMP) stipulates the risk of wildfires and especially forest fires to be among the biggest threats to Bulgarian nature. Besides threatening and damaging ecosystems, wildfires often pose a risk to human life, property and business. Key measures for risk mitigation include improving the capacity of the firefighting forces – both technical and operational (ensuring proper technical machinery and equipment and specialized trainings). Given fires are not always climate related but initiate after deliberate human actions or negligence, awareness raising, information and training measures for the population are key to prevent such events. Such actions are also planned for support in 2021-2027.

### **Contribution to objectives of strategic documents**

The programme implementation contributes to achieving goals of the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action plan, which set out the strategic framework and priorities for climate change adaptation by 2030, the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy 2018-2030, the National Disaster Risk Management Plan and the National Programme for Disaster Risk Reduction 2021-2025. Ensuring support for the effective fulfilment of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy 2030 objectives (to achieve disaster resilient society and to build disaster risk management capacity at all administrative levels) shall create the necessary conditions to reduce disaster consequences.

Recommendations under other strategic documents (Country Report Bulgaria 2019) are also considered, as the investments will have contribution to achieve the objectives of priority 9 “Local Development” under development axis 3 “Connected and Integrated Bulgaria” of the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030. The envisaged actions contribute to strategic objective 2 “Stimulating urban development”, Pillar 2 “Protecting the Environment”, Priority Area 5 “Environmental risks” of the revised Action Plan to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (as per Staff working document of the EC from 06.04.2020).

## **VI. Air**

### **Lessons learnt, challenges, investment needs**

As regards the **air quality** domestic heating and transport are the main air pollutants with particulate matter (PM). PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are the most problematic pollutants affecting human health. As per the National Air Quality Management Programme (NAQMP 2018-2024), the main source of emissions of primary PM<sub>10</sub> in all municipalities is domestic heating using inefficient stoves and solid fuel (wood/coal) boilers, which are estimated to represent 85% of PM<sub>10</sub> emissions. Despite the significant investments in 2014-2020 programming period (over EUR 300 mln.), upscaling is needed to overcome the poor air quality problems considering also the relatively low standard of living, traditions in people’s behaviour and attitude related to heating and private transport, etc.

The National Air Pollution Control Programme 2020–2030 outlines the policies and measures that provide an opportunity to achieve the national obligations for emission reduction for 2020-2029 and 2030. These commitments are related to the annual common anthropogenic emissions of:

sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), non-methane volatile organic compounds, ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, compared to the emissions in the basic year 2005, according to Directive (EU) 2016/2284 requirements. Regarding NAPCP 75% reduction in PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions between 2016 and 2030 is expected, from 31.9 to 7.8 ktOE/year. The contribution of PE 2021-2027 to this goal is 1 ktOE.

The NAQMP 2018-2024 sets a complex of measures to contribute to achieve the PM standards according to Directive 2008/50/EC, not later than 2024. The proposed measures are related to reducing the primary PM<sub>10</sub> emissions of certain sources with main focus on domestic heating on solid fuel. Replacing solid fuel stoves/boilers with alternative heating options will contribute to reduction of the harmful emissions, which will lead to significant benefits to human health. A positive effect will also have the contribution to both households' resource and energy efficiency. Experience has shown that timely, pro-active, direct communication with the citizens is key to the effective implementation of projects. Funding will be provided for targeted regional information campaigns, taking into account the regional specifics, as well as for a broad national campaign on the announcement of the opportunities for free replacement of heating appliances. To reduce the risk of exacerbating energy poverty the households that receive social aid for heating will be supported with photovoltaic installations (incl. batteries) under a condition that the new heating alternative is an air-to-air heat pump. This will have also contribution to the European Green Deal objectives with regard to the promotion of RES and to the decarbonization, in addition to the decommissioning of coal heaters.

In the NAQMP 2018-2024, transport is identified as the second main polluter after domestic heating. It is recommended to municipalities responsible for public transport measures to "provide vehicles that meet the strictest environmental requirements or electric vehicles". Despite the recorded trend of improving the AAQ for 2022–2024 in terms of the excessive levels of PM<sub>10</sub> according to Directive 2008/50/EC, a new challenge is the adoption of Directive (EU) 2024/2881, which updates the AAQ standards, including the excessive levels of 11 pollutants, incl. PM (which are more closely aligned with the WHO guidelines), to be achieved by 2030.

The implementation of measures that are permissible under the NAQMP, with a focus primarily on municipalities that have not achieved sustainable air quality in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2008/50, should continue, and if possible – should deepen. In connection with the adoption of Directive (EU) 2024/2881 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (recast) and the new air quality requirements introduced - actions should be taken to address the new challenges, based on adopted legislation and/or a relevant programme document. **Contribution to objectives of strategic documents**

The programme support aims to contribute for achieving compliance with the requirements of Directive 2008/50/EC (CAFE) and Directive (EU) 2016/2284. Bulgaria is in a violation due to excessive PM<sub>10</sub> pollution (Judgment of the EU Court of Justice in Case C 488/15), at the same time, in December 2020, the European Commission brought an action before the EU Court of Justice against Bulgaria for non-compliance with its previous decision.

The envisaged investments plan to address the main challenges outlined within the NAQMP (2018-2024) and the NAPCP (2020-2030) and to contribute to achieving their main objectives. The funds provided will contribute to Priority 5. Clean air and biodiversity of the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030 and to strategic objective 2 "Stimulating urban development", Pillar 2 "Protecting the Environment", Priority Area 6 "Biodiversity and landscapes, quality of air and soils" of the revised Action Plan to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (as per Staff working document of the EC from 06.04.2020). The investments will contribute to the national targets in the area of decarbonisation, set in the Integrated National Plan on Energy and Climate 2021-2030, especially the share of the energy from renewable sources.

## **PE 2021-2027 CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC OF COVID-19**



The coronavirus outbreak is a major shock for the European and global economy. It constitutes a challenge for the state economy and the livelihood of citizens. During this health crisis it is vital to protect critical sectors by ensuring new job opportunities and workers' confidence as well as to invest in measures that shall improve ecosystems and environmental conditions and as a consequence to prevent further spread of the virus. Lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic have a direct, short-term positive impact on the environment, especially in terms of emissions and air quality, as this effect is more likely to be temporary.

Scientists are studying the impact that air pollution can have on the severity of illness. Exposure to polluted air has been associated with cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, both of which have been identified as pre-existing health problems, lethal outcome risk factor in COVID-19 patients. The link between air pollution and coronavirus reinforces the need for pollution reduction measures in subsequent recovery actions.

The UNO remarks that the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the critical importance of sanitation and adequate access to water to prevent and limit morbidity. Access to drinking water and sanitation is extremely important in this regard, especially in order to protect human life and health. The provision of adequate infrastructure for disposal and treatment of wastewater is an essential factor for reducing the pollution of groundwater and surface water from the discharge of untreated wastewater, further contributing to improving the quality of life and protecting human health.

The contribution of investments to job creation should be noted, especially in the context of such an unprecedented situation, which reflects on the economy not only of the country but also throughout the EU. Significant infrastructure investments provide an opportunity for additional business impetus in addressing the current difficulties in overcoming unemployment, generating GDP and, last but not least, providing opportunities for activities to be carried out by businesses.

### **PROGRAMME ENVIRONMENT IN THE LIGHT OF THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL**

Compliance of the programme's interventions with the European Green Deal objectives for transition to CO<sub>2</sub> neutrality will be promoted. The support under the PE shall demonstrate how climate and environmental challenges may be turned into opportunities regarding the efficient use of resources, moving to a clean, circular economy and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity and cutting pollution, especially in relation to water and air sectors. In this regard, the main contribution of PE through the planned procedures to the Green Deal policies relates to the "ambition of zero pollution for a non-toxic environment" and in particular to improve the monitoring, reporting, prevention and elimination of air and water pollution.

The types of actions are compliant with the "do no significant harm" principle (DNSH principle) considering the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) Regulation and the National RRP. In selecting operations the climate proofing of investments in infrastructure will be respected by provision of application terms related to ensuring "energy efficiency", adherence to reducing the GHG emissions and preventing the infrastructure from being vulnerable to potential long-term climate impacts.

### **CHALLENGES IN ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE**

Despite the experience gained during the two programming periods, some of the beneficiaries lack sufficient capacity in the preparation and subsequent implementation of projects.

Referring to the recommendations in 2019 and 2020 Country Reports and the need for additional efforts to strengthen and increase the administrative capacity for the effective administration and implementation of the EU Funds, the Managing Authority (MA) plans to use Technical Assistance (TA) Priority support in a more strategic way. As a long-term objective, TA will address the strengthening and maintaining the institutional and technical capacity of the programme authorities, (potential) beneficiaries and the relevant partners. In order to adequately address the identified needs of the beneficiaries, tailor-made training plans shall be applied in terms of successful project preparation, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The measures will be

based on in-dept analysis respecting the nationally developed “Roadmap for administrative capacity building 2021-2027”.

It is planned to upgrade the good practice by organizing trainings, conducting awareness campaigns, as well as introductory trainings after the conclusion of the grant contracts with beneficiaries. The regular interaction of the MA with the beneficiaries and their partners will continue through consultations, trainings, workshops (including online), on-the-spot checks, publication of standard documents, detailed written guidelines, instructions, etc. Trainings are provided for units and structures of the Ministry of Environment and Water, supporting the work with specific expertise by sectors, and for the Monitoring Committee as partners in the monitoring and implementation of the programme. Support is planned on topics identified on the basis of a need analysis with support through the TA priority. This ensures the upgrading of the results of project “Analysis and measures to improve the capacity of structures within the MoEW for implementation of projects under OPE 2014-2020”, with the needs of the individual types (potential) beneficiaries for 2021-2027.

Needs for upgrading the MA capacity with a focus on simplified costs, financial instruments and state aid have been identified. The challenge remains the retention of qualified and efficient employees, given the significant labor shortage and the growth of wages in the private sector. In addition, pursuant to Art. 74 (1) (c, d) of the CPR, priority is given to strengthening the capacity to detect, report and track irregularities and fraud by: reporting to the Irregularity Management System, including irregularities/frauds arising from OLAF cases/recommendations, and regular updating of all notifications; development of an anti-fraud policy at programme level, in accordance with the National Anti-Fraud Strategy; making full use of available data retrieval tools such as ARAHNE.

For the Investment for jobs and growth goal:

Table 1

<b>Policy objective or JTF specific objective</b>	<b>Specific objective or dedicated priority*</b>	<b>Justification (summary)</b>
2.4	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	<p>Implementation of the Country Report Bulgaria 2019 recommendations, according to which investments are necessary in emergency management systems for disaster prevention and response, risk limitation and adaptation to climate change. Implementation of risk prevention and management measures, focused on floods, landslides and building on the measures from 2014-2020 period with investments, addressing droughts, forest fires and other natural disasters, according to the documents, developed at national level (the Disaster Risk Management Plan – enabling condition for 2021-2027 period; National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy 2018-2030). It is planned to finance the implementation of measures within the FRMPs aiming to fulfil the commitments under the Floods Directive 2007/60/EC. The focus is on preventing the risk for population’s life and health; upscaling Iskar pilot with elaboration of the National Real Time Water Management System and extending the scope of water bodies covered by the System; further development of existing risk management and early warning systems; continuing the investments in population preparedness for response, providing professionals’ technical capacity on the ground to prevent and respond in case of wildfires.</p> <p>Regarding the reduction of drought impact on water resources and flood risk management, support is envisaged for the implementation of studies, evaluations, analyzes, models, prognoses, incl. those related to the preparation of the FRMPs for the period 2028-2033.</p>
2.5	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	<p>[2 000 per specific objective or dedicated ESF+ priority or JTF specific objective]</p> <p>Implementing Recommendation 3 of the Council from 5.06.19 regarding 2019 National Reform Programme of Bulgaria and containing statement regarding 2019 Convergence Programme of Bulgaria and continuing the efforts to comply with the</p>

		<p>WFD requirements and Directive 91/271/EEC. Implementation of the Country Report Bulgaria 2020 recommendation on environmental infrastructure and the Country Report 2019 requirements, according to which the levels of connectivity and treatment of urban wastewater are relatively low. The analysis shows that the water supply and sewerage investments have significantly increased during the last decade, financed mostly by EU funding. However, weaknesses are identified in planning and managing these projects. The investment needs with a high priority will be addressed, defined in 2019 Country Report to increase the level of connectivity and urban waste water treatment, aimed at stimulating sustainable water management and more specifically - improvement of water collection and waste water treatment (first priority agglomerations of more than 10 000 P.E.) and reduction of water losses. The investments contribute to implementation of the Strategy for Development and Management of the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector 2014-2023 and to the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030, reflecting the needs identified in the National Investment Plan in water and wastewater sectors. Support is provided for national studies to protect and improve the status of surface and groundwater needed to increase the reliability of assessments of pressure, impact and condition of water bodies and to introduce new methods for assessing the status and monitoring of activities for the updating of the RBMPs for the period 2028-2033 for identification of appropriate measures for the purposes of fulfilling the commitments under Art. 13 of the WFD and achieving the objectives under Art. 4 of the WFD, as well as for the preparation of a Drought Management Plan.</p> <p>The investments will contribute also for the implementation of priority actions in EIR 2019 for Bulgaria, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve monitoring capacities with a view to lower the dependence on expert judgment for assessing the ecological status/potential of the water bodies in accordance with the WFD;</li> <li>• Step up efforts to address compliance gaps with the Directive 91/271/EEC.</li> </ul>
2.6	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	<p>Implementing Recommendation 3 of the Council from 05.06.19 regarding 2019 National Reform Programme of Bulgaria 2019 and containing statement regarding Convergence Programme of Bulgaria 2019, continuing the efforts to comply with the requirements of Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC. Implementation of the Country Report Bulgaria 2019 requirements, according to which the waste management is still challenging, although the generated waste quantity is under the EU-average. The percentage of landfilled municipal waste is among the highest in EU and the separate waste collection is not functioning optimally as this is also observed by the respective infrastructure and increasing public awareness, the capacity of municipalities to organize, contract and manage waste collection and treatment is limited. Addressing the recommendations is aimed at supporting the transition to a circular economy. The priority target is the municipal waste (according to the definition under Art. 3 (2b) of Directive 2008/98/EC, as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/851), construction and demolition waste, through investment measures for achieving the 2030 recycling and landfilling reduction targets, with a focus on separate collection and recycling.</p> <p>The foreseen interventions will contribute also for the implementation of priority actions from EIR 2019 for Bulgaria: “Improve and extend separate collection of waste, including for bio-waste” and are in line with Priority 4. Circular and low-carbon economy of the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030. The focus is “on the transition from landfilling to prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of most of the formed waste from industrial and domestic processes”. The interventions also comply with the Analysis of the Socio-Economic Development of Bulgaria 2007-2017 for setting the national priorities for the period 2021-2027 in particular “Interventions oriented towards waste management will continue, in an effort to intensify the processes of transformation from linear to a circular economy and a reduction in the share of landfilled waste as a result of an increase of recycled waste”. All measures address the identified needs within the NWMP 2021-2028.</p>
2.7	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	<p>Implementation of the Country Report Bulgaria 2019 - the efforts are on rehabilitation of lands (landfill technical recultivation), improvement of ambient air quality and further establishment of effective management structures of Natura 2000.</p> <p>The focus is on maintenance and restoration of ecosystems and their inherent biodiversity within and outside Natura 2000. Interventions shall continue aimed at improving the status of species and habitats subject to conservation in Natura 2000 sites, the activities of stakeholders’ capacity building to be effectively involved in Natura 2000 management processes shall be upgraded and providing public support</p>

		<p>for the network. Support is also planned for protected territories, as a priority, where they overlap with protected sites.</p> <p>The interventions foreseen will also contribute to the implementation of priority actions in EIR 2019 for Bulgaria, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish effective management structures for Natura 2000 network with sufficient administrative and financial capacity.</li> </ul> <p>Continuing the efforts to comply with the requirements of Directive 2008/50/EC and taking actions to achieve the standards and requirements under Directive (EU) 2024/2881, by building on the investments from 2014-2020, addressing domestic heating and transport as main air pollutants. Investments will be in accordance with the NAQMP 2018-2024 and will contribute to the objectives of the NAPCP 2020-2030. Support is envisaged for investments in achieving ambient air quality standards and, where applicable, keeping compliance with these standards. The objective is to meet them for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, according to the Directive and the national legislation. The implementation of measures will contribute to decreasing in polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons emissions and to fulfilling the commitments according to Directive (EU) 2016/2284. The interventions shall focus as a priority on replacement of heating devices on solid fuel, but also on green infrastructure in urban areas to address the secondary dusting.</p> <p>The interventions foreseen will also contribute to the implementation of priority actions in EIR 2019 for Bulgaria, namely: accelerate reductions in PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> emission and concentration. To prevent the exacerbation of energy poverty, it is planned to provide photovoltaics to households that receive heating aids, when the selected heating alternative is an air-air heatpump.</p>
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\* Dedicated priorities according to ESF+ Regulation.

For the EMFAF:

Table 1A

Policy objective	Priority	SWOT analysis (for each priority)	Justification (summary)
		<p>Strengths [10 000 per priority]</p> <p>Weaknesses [10 000 per priority]</p> <p>Opportunities [10 000 per priority]</p> <p>Threats [10 000 per priority]</p> <p>Identification of needs on the basis of the SWOT analysis and taking into account the elements set out in Article 8(5) of the EMFAF Regulation [10 000 per priority]</p>	[20 000 per priority]

## 2. Priorities

Reference: Article 22(2) and point (c) of Article 22(3) CPR

### 2.1. Priorities other than technical assistance

#### 2.1.1. Title of the priority [300] (repeated for each priority)

#### Priority 1 “Water”

<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to youth employment
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to social innovative actions

<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation*
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation <sup>4</sup>
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to urban mobility specific objective set out in point (viii) of Article 3(1)(b) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to digital connectivity specific objective set out in point (v) of Article 3(1)(a) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation

\* If marked go to section 2.1.1.2.

**2.1.1.1. Specific objective<sup>5</sup>** (repeated for each selected specific objective for priorities other than technical assistance)

**Specific objective:** “Promoting access to water and sustainable water management”.

#### **2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds**

Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

*The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:*

*Text field [8 000]*

- Infrastructure measures (preparation and implementation) for collection, disposal and treatment of wastewater contributing to achieve compliance with Directive 91/271/EEC, incl. for projects which implementation has started in 2014-2020;
- Infrastructure measures (preparation and implementation) for water supply regarding Directive 98/83/EC [Directive (EU) 2020/2184] contributing to the reduction of water losses on the water supply network and to the improvement of the water quality, incl. for projects which implementation has started in 2014-2020;
- Development of RFSs for future financing for newly consolidated regions Blagoevgrad, Kyustendil, Lovech, Montana, Pazardzhik, Razgrad – after the consolidation of the last 6 regions in the country;
- Support for development of RBMPs – assessments, data collection, etc.;
- Measures related to monitoring and assessment of the quality of the water intended for human consumption in regard to the recast Directive.

The investments in WSS infrastructure are determined within the National Investment WSS Plan – an enabling condition for the WSS sector. The needs of over EUR 2.88 bln under both Directives – on drinking water and on wastewater, for the agglomerations above 10 000 PE significantly exceed the available financing under the European funds. For water supply the estimated needs are EUR 1.79 bln and for wastewater disposal and treatment – EUR 1.09 bln. In addition to the ERDF/CF funding and the national cofinancing, own budget of the Water Operators is envisaged. In 2021-2027 the planned investments focus on the implementation of the regional approach following the principle “one separate WSS territory (consolidated region) – one consolidated WSS operator (Regional Water Operator) – one RFS – one project”. The provision of investments to WSS operators in consolidated regions is in line with the policy in the WSS sector for aggregation of the water supply and sanitation systems, thereby ensuring greater stability for WSS operators to become self-sufficient, to be able to maintain the infrastructure and to renew investments, and the remaining investments support the overall state

<sup>4</sup> In case resources under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation are taken into account for the purposes of Article 7(4) ESF+ Regulation.

<sup>5</sup> Except for a specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation.

policy in implementing the European commitments under Directive 91/271/EEC. The ownership of the infrastructure remains municipal and state, and the planning is directed to regionalization, taking into account the needs of the territory in its entirety, but taking into account at the same time the regional characteristics. The regionalization of operators becomes mandatory with the adoption of the draft Law on WSS. An important role for the stability of the WSS operators is playing the Bulgarian WSS Holding EAD with a capital of 1 billion Euro provided by the state budget. The Holding is a principal of the operators, not only providing to its subsidiaries general management and control services in the field of public procurement, technical assistance, advice, participation and financing related to their investment activities under EU funds, provision of guarantees, etc., but also guaranteeing their financial and operational status to ensure sustainable performance of the WSS projects.

Support is directed to agglomerations with more than 5 000 P.E. as priority is given to agglomerations with more than 10 000 P.E. and to agglomerations where investments contribute to address or prevent infringement procedures against Bulgaria for nonfulfilling obligations arising from Directive 91/271/EEC (e.g. infringement procedure No 2017/2082). For 2021-2027 investments shall start in the consolidated regions of Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Pleven, Sofia-district, Sofia-city, Targovishte, Haskovo and Dobrich that are with RFSs developed with support under the 2014-2020. They will be complemented by support for investments agreed under the NRRP, the financing of which through the Recovery and Resilience Facility is hindered due to circumstances of a different nature. These are the agglomerations of Dolni Chiflik (WSS Varna), Gen. Toshevo (WSS Dobrich), Krumovgrad (WSS Kardzhali), Rogosh-Skutare and Saedinenie (WSS Plovdiv), Kotel (WSS Sliven), Devin (WSS Smolyan), Galabovo and Pavel Banya (WSS Stara Zagora), for which a mandatory percentage of own financing by the beneficiary in the amount of 12% of the total value of the eligible investment costs under the project is applied. A similar approach is applied to investments in Sofia Municipality, where the percentage of own financing is 25% of the total value of the eligible investment costs under the project.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.

### **Forms of support**

The NIP for WSS states that all measures that reduce the costs for WSS services will also make these services more affordable. This includes not only consolidation of the WSS operators but also reduction of the capital investment costs. In addition, taking into account the financial position of some of the WSS operators, application of loan/guarantee funding is expected to be difficult. The current lack of assets to serve as collateral will make the loan approval process relatively complex. On the other hand, the loans equal to additional financial costs for the operators and may impact the prices of water and sewerage services; according to the current regulatory framework of the WSS market the prices are regulated by the Energy and Water Regulatory Commission to respect the social affordability.

As stated in the National Investment Plan, this gives reason to believe that public funding is the most likely option of all other funding sources for achieving compliance with the EU legislation. This is reinforced also by the fact that the WSS infrastructure in Bulgaria needs urgent replacement and reconstruction; the PE funding is limited; and the prices of WSS service provided by the Operators may rise to levels that reach or exceed the existing threshold of social affordability.

All these result in provision of grants for the measures for WSS infrastructure, based on cost-benefit analyses with a co-financing by the beneficiaries. The co-financing namely is planned to be covered by financial instruments dedicated under the Programme based on the lessons learnt and the conclusions within the Ex-ante assessment of financial instruments (FIs).

For the other measures under the Priority grants are envisaged given they are not revenue generating, nor cost saving interventions and the Ex-ante assessment of FIs does not identify applicability of financial instruments for these types of activities.

**Synergy and complementarity:**

**Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Development for the period 2021-2027**

PE measures shall complement the measures under the Strategic Plan – activities for completion of collection systems in agglomerations below 2 000 PE in rural areas (where the existing sewerage system must be over 90% completed), if the needs are identified within RFSs; treatment facilities are also eligible.

*The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:*

*Text field [1 000]*

Bodies with obligations according to Environmental Protection Act, Waters Act and Regulation of Water Supply and Sewerage Services Act, about implementation of eligible activities, financial intermediaries in cases of funding through financial instruments; the population in agglomerations above 10 000 P.E., the population of the country in general and the business. The implementation of the respective policies is under the responsibility of different bodies, e.g. the regional WSS operators, Bulgarian Water Holding, Sofia Municipality, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, municipalities, structures of/within the Ministry of Health and structures of/within the Ministry of Environment and Water, etc.

*Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

*Text field [2 000]*

Environmental protection and climate change adaptation are horizontal policies, focused on Bulgarian citizens as a main target group, regardless of their sex, race, or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. During the planning, assessment and implementation of the measures supported within this priority the transparency, equality, inclusion and non-discrimination principles are going to be applied. The priority supports the access to drinking water, to collection, disposal and treatment of waste water and the reduction of water pollution and dependent habitats.

*Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The support territories are the agglomerations within the meaning of Directive 91/271/EEC. The priority investments, which are implemented on a regional principle, are directed to the designated territories of the consolidated WSS operators under the Waters Act, which coincide with the regions as per the Act on the administrative and territorial structure of the Republic of Bulgaria. As of 2021 only 6 regions in the country have not been consolidated. Investments in agglomerations of above 10 000 P.E. within the other 22 consolidated regions take into account the 6 new beneficiaries - Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Pleven, Sofia-district, Targovishte and Haskovo, and additionally the phased projects between 2014-2020 and 2021-2027. Given this, the use of territorial tools is not applicable.

*The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

Investments in infrastructure for collection, disposal and wastewater treatment, protection of water resources and provision of water supply contribute directly to achieving the strategic

objective 2 “Stimulating urban development”, Pillar 2 “Protecting the Environment”, Priority Area 4 “Water quality” of the revised Action Plan to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (as per Staff working document of the EC from 06.04.2020). In addition, the support under the priority has a contribution to the EU Action Plan: Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil through support for the achievement of the objectives for the good status of water bodies, incl. and the coastal waters in the implementation of the objectives of the RBMP and the Maritime Strategy of Bulgaria. The interventions in the disposal and treatment of wastewater in settlements in agglomerations above 10 000 PE falling in coastal areas shall address pollutants as part of the key types of pressure in the Black Sea (pollutants, underwater noise, seabed integrity, marine litter, with an emphasis on microplastics).

The support under the priority will have also a contribution to the protection and restoration of the Black Sea, to achieve “good status“ of coastal waters and to achieve or maintain a good state of the marine environment, which will have a positive cross-border effect.

Given the specific type of supported measures under the priority the implementation of joint projects and/or allocation of resources towards beneficiaries in regions outside the country territory are not envisaged. Investments in WSS infrastructure determined within the National Investment aim to achieve compliance with the EU legislation on the basis of regional approach.

Given the implementation of the planned eligible measures will have an overall positive effect on the water bodies, potential beneficial effects are expected also to other components and factors of the environment and human health, including on the territory of other countries. A positive impact on the surface and groundwater of the neighboring countries, as well as on the marine water and marine environment is anticipated, especially when measures are applied in cross-border areas.

*The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [1 000]*

FIs are planned and the expected mechanism for their implementation is a combination of grant and debt financing in two separate operations. The allocation of the 2021-2027 financial instruments takes into account the 2014-2020 lessons learnt, where only 5 out of 16 RWOs took the opportunity provided by FIs under the programme. Seven of the Operators have selected commercial banks or FLAG (state fund aimed at supporting Bulgarian municipalities and associations, incl. water supply and sewerage associations) financing. Four Operators will have the opportunity to use FIs under OPE up to 2023. The type and the amount of the FIs for 2021-2027 are determined based on the Ex-ante assessment of FIs. The analyses identify prerequisites for continuing the support approach from the programming period 2014-2020 with the following parameters: the proposed amount of FIs under PE is EUR 20 mln (EU share – EUR 17 mln). The defined financial product is a loan intended to provide financing for the water operators own participation. The expected additional financing, provided by the financial intermediaries is EUR 4.76 mln, incl. fees, and the expected leverage effect is 1.4 x. This estimates a FIs amount to final recipients of EUR 23.7 mln under total investments of EUR 230 mln.

### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

*Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation*

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024 )	Target (2029)
Water	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	ERDF	Transition	RCO 32	New or upgraded capacity for waste water treatment	population equivalent	0	0
			Less developed				88 900	340 000



		CF					0	70 000
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Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference year	Target (2029)	Source of data [200]	Comments [200]
Water	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	ERDF	Transition	RC R 41	Population connected to improved public water supply	persons	0	2021	0	Projects supported, MRDPW, PE MA	
			Less developed				0	2021	570 000		
		CF				persons	0	2021	320 000		
		ERDF	Transition	RC R 42	Population connected to at least secondary public waste water treatment	persons	0	2021	0	Projects supported, PE MA	
			Less developed				0	2021	465 000		
		CF				persons	0	2021	630 000		

#### 2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention (not applicable to the EMFAF)

Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
1 Water	ERDF	Transition	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	062 Provision of water for human consumption (extraction, treatment, storage and distribution infrastructure, efficiency measures, drinking water supply)	0,00
		Less developed			158 114 368,00
		Transition		064 Water management and water resource conservation (including river basin management, specific climate change adaptation measures, reuse, leakage reduction)	936 975,00
		Less developed			7 614 207,00
		Transition		065 Waste water collection and treatment	0,00
		Less developed			158 114 368,00

	CF			062 Provision of water for human consumption (extraction, treatment, storage and distribution infrastructure, efficiency measures, drinking water supply)	141 560 946,00
				065 Waste water collection and treatment	141 560 946,00

Table 5: Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
1 Water	ERDF	Transition	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	01 Grant	936 975,00
		Less developed			323 842 943,00
	CF			01 Grant	266 121 892,00
				03 Support through financial instruments: loan	17 000 000,00

Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
1 Water	ERDF	Transition	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	33	936 975,00
		Less developed			323 842 943,00
	CF			33	283 121 892,00

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 8: Dimension 7 - ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
1 Water	ERDF	Transition	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	03 Gender neutral	936 975,00
		Less developed			323 842 943,00
	CF				283 121 892,00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

### 2.1.1. Title of the priority [300]

#### Priority 2 “Waste”

<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to youth employment
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to social innovative actions
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation*
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation <sup>6</sup>
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to urban mobility specific objective set out in point (viii) of Article 3(1)(b) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to digital connectivity specific objective set out in point (v) of Article 3(1)(a) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation

\* If marked go to section 2.1.1.2

**2.1.1.1. Specific objective<sup>7</sup>** (repeated for each selected specific objective for priorities other than technical assistance)

**Specific objective:** “Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy”.

#### 2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

*The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:*

*Text field [8 000]*

The eligible measures comply with the needs identified in the NWMP 2021-2028, its programmes and action plans, as well as in the Strategy and Action Plan for the Transition to a Circular Economy 2021-2027:

- Measures for construction, extension and/or upgrade of separate municipal/regional waste collection systems and recycling of biodegradable waste - for the RWMA as per Annex 8 of the NWMP 2021-2028;
- Measures for construction of systems/centers for separate collection and preparation for reuse and repair;
- Waste recycling measures – eligible combination with separate collection and pre-treatment of separately collected waste;
- Models for optimizing the process of household waste management by the municipalities in Bulgaria;
- Measures for optimizing the processes of household waste management by the municipalities in relation with the introduction of a “pay as you throw” scheme;
- Raising awareness on practices and behavior in connection to sustainable consumption, circular economy, waste monitoring, as well as information and awareness campaigns for stakeholders and population.

The measures relate to the waste within the scope of the Waste Management Act (WMA) - household, industrial and construction waste and whose treatment is reported for the achievement of the Bulgarian national objectives according to the European and national legislation. Their

<sup>6</sup> In case resources under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation are taken into account for the purposes of Article 7(4) ESF+ Regulation.

<sup>7</sup> Except for a specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation.

implementation will contribute to reducing the amount of landfilled household waste and increasing the share of separately collected and recycled waste to support the transition to a circular economy. Priority is given to measures focused on household waste management within the obligations of the municipalities.

The investment measures for household waste management focus mainly on RWMA with needs to complete/upgrade their systems for separate collection and recycling mainly of biodegradable waste and preparation for reuse to meet the regulatory targets at regional level by 2030 and whose needs are identified in the NWMP 2021-2028. The needs of municipalities for methodological support and successful implementation of the "pay as you throw" scheme in determining waste management costs and the municipal waste fee, subject to an infringement procedure launched against Bulgaria, are also addressed.

The waste recycling measures that are carried out by recycling companies are related to the household, industrial and construction waste and will lead to an increase in recycling capacity. These measures are eligible in combination with pre-treatment of separately collected waste and/or separate collection of waste to be recycled.

The eligible measures do not apply to activities financed from product fees/royalties<sup>8</sup> and in this regard no support is allowed for recovery organizations under the WMA. The construction of installations for incineration and/or other recovery of waste with energy production as well as pretreatment installations for mixed household waste will not be supported.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.

#### **Forms of support:**

The allocation of grants and FIs is based on the conclusions of the updated Ex-ante assessment of FIs as of 2023. The local authorities are responsible for the household waste management, as the costs are covered by the municipal waste fee and the municipal budget. In order to achieve the 2030 objectives significant resources are needed. Therefore, to prevent the increase of the waste fee for citizens over the social affordability threshold, the main form of support is the grant funding to complement the municipal budget. With regard to the eligible measures the updated Ex-ante assessment of FIs identified the potential for implementation of FIs in combination with grants only for the measure related to the separate collection and recycling of biodegradable waste, taking into account the legal restrictions and opportunities for taking on municipal debt.

For the waste recycling measures application of FIs is identified, as such projects could generate significant direct and indirect economic benefits.

For the other measures under the Priority only grants are envisaged given they are neither revenue generating, nor cost saving interventions and the Ex-ante assessment of FIs does not identify applicability of financial instruments for these types of activities.

#### **Synergy and complementarity:**

The measures will be implemented in complementarity and in demarcation, according to the NWMP 2021-2028 and the Strategy and Action Plan for Circular Economy of Republic of Bulgaria for 2021-2027. Synergy will be achieved by the implementation of PE 2021-2027 and Programme „Competitiveness and Innovation in Enterprises“ 2021-2027 as follows:

#### **Programme “Competitiveness and Innovation in Enterprises” 2021-2027 (PCIE)**

Synergy of the measures towards promoting the transition to a circular economy will be achieved by ensuring complementarity between PE and PCIE 2021-2027 support, following the demarcation with

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<sup>8</sup> Which are designed to cover all the costs of managing the waste stream concerned and are spent on activities related to the implementation of waste recycling/use targets.

regard to enterprises: PCIE will support enterprises excluding enterprises performing activities under code 38.21 Recycling of materials from the Classification of Economic Activities. PE will support enterprises performing activities under code 38.21 Recycling of materials from the Classification of Economic Activities – 2025 for waste within the scope of the Waste Management Act (except hazardous waste).

### **Maritime, fisheries and aquaculture programme (MFAP)**

The MFAP will support measures focused on waste collection and reduction of litter with regard to fishing activities and fishing gears.

*The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:*

*Text field [1 000]*

The main target groups are the population of Republic of Bulgaria, the business, the NGOs, the municipalities, including consolidated in the Regional Waste Management Associations. The support will be directed mainly to the bodies responsible for implementation of the respective policy, e.g. to municipalities that need to improve the waste management systems and to the recycling enterprises respecting the demarcation and complementarity with other EU financial instruments. NGOs may be supported to implement information and awareness campaign measures. In addition, the National Association of the Municipalities in Republic of Bulgaria is directly involved in assisting the municipalities by developing of models for optimizing the process of household waste management in Bulgaria. Therefore, it is envisaged to provide a direct financing to the Association for the development of the models and for methodological support of the municipalities in the implementation of the models.

*Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

*Text field [2 000]*

Environmental protection and climate change adaptation are horizontal policies, focused on Bulgarian citizens as a main target group, regardless of their sex, race, or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. During the planning, assessment and implementation of the measures supported within this priority the equality, inclusion and non-discrimination principles are going to be applied. This priority supports transition to a circular economy, decrease of the generated waste and of the waste going to landfills, increase of the recycled waste, etc.

*Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The whole territory of the country is eligible for investments.

Measures under the Priority can be implemented at territorial level as complementary financing of the Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) approach. The definition of the measures is based on the conclusions and recommendations of the Evaluation of Operational Programme “Environment” 2014-2020 implementation through the CLLD approach. The Evaluation states that the approach is recommended to support also measures for waste management, for which there is a strong interest from the local communities and the implementation of the approach could contribute, in the long term, to the implementation of waste management policies. However, given the waste legislation requires the achievement of the national objectives to be performed at regional level, territorially targeted measures with funding complementary to the CLLD approach are focused on information and education activities.

*Text field [2 000]*

Investments are based on and contribute to the objectives of the NWMP 2021-2028 and the Strategy and Action Plan for the Transition to a Circular Economy 2021-2027. The implementation of the planned actions contributes to the ecological objectives, identified in the EUSDR – towards the achievement of Strategic objective 2 “Stimulating urban development”, Pillar 2 “Protecting the environment”, Priority Area 5 “Environmental Risks” of the revised Action Plan to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (as per Staff working document of the EC from 06.04.2020).

In addition potential contribution to the achievement of the objectives of Priority Area 10 “Institutional Capacity and Cooperation” is identified. A clear link and coordination between PE 21-27 and the Danube strategy within the Waste priority may be initiated in the area of institutional capacity and knowledge/ solutions exchange with neighbour countries and regions to reduce the amount of landfilled household waste and increasing the share of separately collected and recycled waste to support the transition to a circular economy.

Given the specifics of the supported activities under the priority, it is not envisaged to implement joint projects and/or to provide resources to beneficiaries from regions other than the territory of the country. The support is directed to measures for the management of municipal waste generated on the territory of the respective municipality in accordance with the obligations of the municipalities under the Waste Management Act in order to ensure a contribution to the achievement of the national goals.

*The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [1 000]*

The allocation of FIs takes into account the 2014-2020 lessons learnt, where the market showed a very limited interest to use FIs in the waste management. Despite the efforts made from 01.2017 to 06.2021 no FIs were provided under PA2 and the agreement between the MA and FMFIB was terminated in 2022. The type, the scope and the amount of the FIs for the new period are determined based on analyses and studies of the Ex-Ante Assessment of FIs for 2021-2027 period. The Ex-ante assessment states that there is a potential for projects in the waste sector with regard to the low recycling levels. According to the assessment there is a potential for combined support (in two separate operations) through loans to cover the own cofinancing in projects financed with grants (e.g. for municipal waste infrastructure), as well as for a stand-alone loan for waste recycling measures. The following parameters are defined: the proposed amount of FIs under PE is EUR 15 mln (EU share – EUR 12.46 mln). The defined financial product is a loan intended to provide financing for beneficiaries’ own participation or a stand-alone instrument. The expected additional financing, provided by the financial intermediaries is EUR 3.63 mln incl. fees and the expected leverage effect is 1.43 x. This estimates a FIs amount to final recipients of EUR 18.6 mln under total investments of EUR 204.5 mln.

### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

*Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation*

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
Waste	Promoting the transition to a circular	ERDF	Transition	RCO 34	Additional capacity for waste recycling	tonnes/year	4 000	48 000
			Less developed			tonnes/year	12 500	150 000

	and resource efficient economy		Transition	RCO 107	Investments in facilities for separate waste collection	Euro	242 400	4 968 000
			Less developed			Euro	757 600	15 032 000

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference year	Target (2029)	Source of data [200]	Comments [200]
Waste	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	ERDF	Transition	RCR 103	Waste collected separately	tonnes/year	0	2021	80 000	Supported projects, PE MA	
			Less developed			tonnes/year	0	2021	250 000		
			Transition	RCR 47	Waste recycled	tonnes/year	0	2021	48 000	Supported projects, PE MA	
			Less developed			tonnes/year	0	2021	150 000		

### 2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention (not applicable to the EMFAF)

Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2 Waste	ERDF	Transition	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	067 Household waste management: prevention, minimisation, sorting, reuse, recycling measures	24 518 000,00
		Less developed			197 881 979,00

Table 5: Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2 Waste	ERDF	Transition	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	01 Grant	23 153 000,00
		Less developed			186 789 479,00
		Transition		03 Support through financial instruments: loan	1 365 000,00
		Less developed			11 092 500,00

Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
Waste	ERDF	Transition	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	33	24 518 000,00
		Less developed			197 881 979,00

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2 Waste	ERDF	Transition	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	03 Gender neutral	24 518 000,00
		Less developed			197 881 979,00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

**2.1.1.1. Specific objective<sup>9</sup>** (repeated for each selected specific objective for priorities other than technical assistance)

**Specific objective:** “Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution”.

#### 2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

*The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:*

*Text field [8 000]*

The eligible measure complies with the needs identified in the NWMP 2021-2028:

- Recultivation of landfills and/or ensuring safety of existing landfills without increasing their capacity.

In the NWMP 2021-2028 are analyzed and identified the landfills / cells of landfills for household waste, which are complete and should be decommissioned. European and national legislation requires financial guarantees / collateral arrangements from landfill owners regarding the closure and subsequent monitoring of landfill sites. The owners of landfills for households waste are municipalities. Analyses identify that for some of the landfills the funds

<sup>9</sup> Except for a specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation.



accumulated under Art. 60 of the Waste Management Act are not sufficient to cover all activities for the recultivation and subsequent monitoring. The municipalities need additional funds - for technical recultivation, to recultivate timely and to ensure reduction of the risk of the environmental pollution and to prevent human health risks.

**Forms of support:**

The technical recultivation is envisaged to be supported by grants. The planned support refers only to technical recultivation of landfills/cells of landfills for household waste that meet the legislative requirements. Biological recultivation shall be covered by the funds accumulated under Art. 60 of the Waste Management Act by the municipalities, owners of the landfills. In this respect, no revenue is expected from the activity for which the support is provided and financial instruments are not applicable for this type of activity. The legislative restrictions and the possibilities for taking on debts by the municipalities are also considered. The costs for the household waste management, incl. the recultivation of the landfills, should be covered by the municipal waste fees and the municipal budget. Therefore, grants are envisaged to complement the municipal budget and the accumulated funds under Art. 60 of the Waste Management Act to prevent the increase of the waste fee for citizens over the social affordability threshold.

*The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:*

*Text field [1 000]*

The main target groups are the population of Republic of Bulgaria and the municipalities, owners of the household waste landfills.

*Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

*Text field [2 000]*

Environmental protection and climate change adaptation are horizontal policies, focused on Bulgarian citizens as a main target group, regardless of their sex, race, or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. During the planning, assessment and implementation of the measures supported within this priority the equality, inclusion and non-discrimination principles are going to be applied.

*Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools - point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The specific territories targeted are the municipal landfills with depleted capacity on the territory of the whole country. No territorial tools are planned.

*The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The implementation of supported measures for rehabilitation of contaminated land and covering with a top layer of soil as part of the technical recultivation will contribute to strategic objective 2 “Stimulating urban development”, Pillar 2 “Protecting the Environment”, Priority Area 6 “Biodiversity and landscapes, quality of air and soils”, Activity 7 “Improvement and/or maintenance of soil-related ecosystem services” of the revised Action Plan to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (as per Staff working document of the EC from 06.04.2020).

Given the specifics of the supported activities, namely recultivation of landfills and/or ensuring safety of existing landfills on the territory of the country, which are complete and should be decommissioned according to the requirements of the national legislation, commitment only for

the mayor of the respective municipality, it is not envisaged to implement joint projects and/or to provide resources to beneficiaries from regions other than the territory of the country.

*The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [1 000]*

The technical recultivation is envisaged to be supported by grants. The planned support refers only to technical recultivation of landfills/cells of landfills for household waste that meet the legislative requirements. Biological recultivation shall be covered by the funds accumulated under Art. 60 of the Waste Management Act by the municipalities, owners of the landfills. In this respect, no revenue is expected from the activity for which the support is provided and financial instruments are not applicable for this type of activity. The legislative restrictions and the possibilities for taking on debts by the municipalities are also considered. The costs for the household waste management, incl. the recultivation of the landfills, should be covered by the municipal waste fees and the municipal budget. Therefore, grants are envisaged to complement the municipal budget and the accumulated funds under Art. 60 of the Waste Management Act to prevent the increase of the waste fee for citizens over the social affordability threshold.

### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

*Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation*

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024 )	Target (2029)
Waste	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	ERDF	Transition	RCO 38	Surface area of rehabilitated land supported	ha	0	5
			Less developed				0	75

*Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference year	Target (2029)	Source of data [200]	Comments [200]
Waste	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing	ERDF	Transition	RCR 52	Rehabilitated land used for green areas, social housing, economic or	ha	0	2021	5	Reports of beneficiaries	
			Less developed				0	2021	75		

	all forms of pollution				other uses						
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**2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention**  
(not applicable to the EMFAF)

*Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2 Waste	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	073 Rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land	1 820 000,00
		Less developed			35 890 000,00

Table 5: Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2 Waste	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	01 Grant	1 820 000,00
		Less developed			35 890 000,00

Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2 Waste	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	33	1 820 000,00
		Less developed			35 890 000,00

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
2 Waste	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	03 Gender neutral	1 820 000,00
		Less developed			35 890 000,00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

### 2.1.1. Title of the priority [300]

#### Priority 3 “Biodiversity”

<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to youth employment
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to social innovative actions
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation*
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation <sup>10</sup>
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to urban mobility specific objective set out in point (viii) of Article 3(1)(b) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to digital connectivity specific objective set out in point (v) of Article 3(1)(a) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation

\* If marked go to section 2.1.1.2

#### 2.1.1.1. Specific objective<sup>11</sup> (repeated for each selected specific objective for priorities other than technical assistance)

**Specific objective:** “Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution”.

##### 2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR;

<sup>10</sup> In case resources under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation are taken into account for the purposes of Article 7(4) ESF+ Regulation.

<sup>11</sup> Except for a specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation.

*Text field [8 000]*

Eligible measures aimed at implementing the country's commitments under the European biodiversity legislation, specified in strategic and planning documents at European and national level:

- Measures related to development of NATURA 2000 network:

- Development of management plans for Natura 2000 sites – elaboration of guidelines; development of management plans for protected sites covering the entire territory of Natura 2000 in Bulgaria, including research in relation to clarifying the distribution, population size, impacts and threats for species and natural habitats, incl. conducting public awareness campaigns and involving stakeholders in the process of developing plans;
- Implementation of the management approach in Natura 2000 sites – ensuring support for the management bodies of Natura 2000 sites.
- Improving the knowledge for species and natural habitats through field research (including mapping where defined in NPAF) and determining their conservation status; verification of taxonomic affiliation; identifying the effects of resettlement of non-indigenous species, etc.
- Development of action plans for species.
- Capacity building of stakeholders to implement conservation measures;
- Development of site specific conservation objectives for Natura 2000 protected sites and support for the development and management of ecosystem services and assessment of the condition of green infrastructure elements - setting site specific and detailed conservation objectives, as well as appropriate measures for 250 protected sites and measures for 90 Natura 2000 protected sites; mapping and assessing the state of ecosystems and their services, as well as green infrastructure in Natura 2000, monetary valuation of ecosystem services and determination of the value of the “natural capital”, which should be integrated into accounting systems; demonstrating the application of nature-based solutions to restore ecosystems with a contribution to climate and ensuring connectivity of the Natura 2000 network; ensuring public support by including it in the decision-making process for protected sites conservation.

- Measures aimed to improve the conservation status of habitats and species (incl. birds, fish, cave-bats, reptiles, vascular plants, and coastal, rock, dune types of natural habitats, freshwater habitat types, shrub habitats, etc.), subject to conservation in Natura 2000 network:

- Improving the conservation status of species and habitat types by restoring the hydrological regime; removal of abandoned and/or unusable infrastructure causing fragmentation; building sea connections; restoration of the natural water regime of wetlands and maintenance of appropriate water regime; restoration of nesting sites of species; partial restoration of natural reservoirs that are drained in the past; management of reed massifs; elimination of invasive alien species; limitation of grazing; reintroduction into potential habitats; placing electric fences; restoration of damaged areas; purchase of land; securing electricity grids, etc.
- Improving the conservation status of species through pilot restoration of existing /potential wetlands and meanders along the Danube and its tributaries.

- Measures for protection/restoration of ecosystems and their inherent biodiversity outside Natura 2000 – implementation of measures from national, strategic, programme and planning documents, including measures from management plans for protected territories and action plans for species, such as:

- Providing conditions for protection of endangered species ex-situ by breeding in the relevant sites, storage of genetic material in human-controlled conditions, as well as educational and conservation activities in these sites;
- Conducting DNA analysis, dating (isotope analysis), toxicological analysis and others;
- Establishing of permanent observation plots to ensure data for the parameters as per the ICP Forests Manual;
- Working with stakeholders, in the context of countering poaching, trafficking and illegal trade of wild flora and fauna species;
- Establishment of new and protection and improvement of existing green areas in cities and suburbs;
- Purchase and delivery of motor vehicles to ensure the organization and management activities of Rila, Pirin and Central Balkan National Park Directorates.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.

### **Forms of support**

Grants are envisaged for the measures under the Priority given they are not revenue generating, nor cost saving interventions. The Ex-ante assessment of FIs does not identify applicability of financial instruments for these types of activities.

### **Synergy and complementarity:**

Complementarity of the priority measures will be ensured through implementation of the measures set out in the National Priority Action Framework for Natura 2000 which are supported by other sources of funding. The framework identifies measures as well as their funding sources – programmes co-financed by Cohesion Policy funds, national budget, Common Agricultural Policy etc., thus ensuring both synergistic effect of improving the conservation status of species/types of natural habitats and providing demarcation among the respective interventions envisaged. Examples are presented below:

### **Programme Technical Assistance (PTA)**

The Programme supports the upgrade of the Information System for Protected Sites of Natura 2000 Network and the Information System under the National Biodiversity Monitoring System; monitoring of the efficiency of the measures that are implemented in order to improve the conservation status of species and habitats; support for the National unit for management and implementation of the NPAF 2021-2027.

### **Interreg Programmes**

The Crossborder cooperation programmes focus on support for exchange of experience and good practices.

### **Programme “Education” 2021-2027**

Support is envisaged for measures regarding development and implementation of programmes for environmental education with a focus on Natura 2000 for pupils and students

### **“Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture” Programme**

The focus of the support is on species and habitat types in marine protected sites, as well as species on the territories of aquaculture communities.

### **Strategic Plan for Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas**

E.g. measures for improvement of the habitats of protected species in agricultural lands and measures for improvement of the conservation status of forest natural habitats through introduction of silvicultural practices for sustainable management of forest habitats.

*The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:*

*Text field [1 000]*

Priority interventions are directed to all stakeholders related to the policies for improvement and conservation of the biodiversity, as well as the management of Natura 2000 network. These are not only the institutions responsible for the formation, implementation and enforcement of Natura 2000 policy and for the improvement of the conservation status of species and natural habitats, but also local authorities, legal entities with for-profit and non-profit purposes, local initiative groups, the scientific and academic community, land owners and users. Last but not least, it should be brought out as a main target group the population of Republic of Bulgaria considering the benefits of improving the quality of life - according to UN Goal 15, aimed at preventing the loss of biodiversity “well-managed protected areas and territories benefit „healthy“ ecosystems, which in turn contributes to the protection of human health”.

*Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

*Text field [2 000]*

Environmental protection and climate change adaptation are horizontal policies, focused on Bulgarian citizens as a main target group, regardless of their sex, race, or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. During the planning, assessment and implementation of the measures supported within this priority the equality, inclusion and non-discrimination principles are going to be applied. This priority supports nature preservation by restoration and support of ecosystems and their inherent biodiversity.

*Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The specific territories to be targeted are the respective protected sites defined under the NPAF to be supported by the Programme. As for the measures outside Natura, the whole territory of the country is eligible.

However, measures have been identified to be supported by complementary funding to the CLLD approach. They are based on the experience and the lessons learnt from the programming period 2014-2020, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the Evaluation of Operational Programme “Environment” 2014-2020 implementation through the CLLD approach. The Evaluation states that given the implementation of conservation measures requires specific expertise and knowledge, which burden the beneficiaries, only 9 of a total 64 Local Action Groups have planned measures within the Strategies to be supported under OP Environment 2014-2020. The recommendations are to envisage soft measures for support in 2021-2027 such as information and education measures, activities related to changing the attitude, seminars and forums, etc. derived from the analyses in the NPAF and other strategic, programme and planning documents, to strengthening the local communities capacity to perform activities to preserve and restore the biodiversity etc.

*The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The specifics of the supported measures, based entirely on the NPAF for priority species on the territory of the country, do not presuppose joint projects and/or to provide resources to beneficiaries from regions other than the territory of the country. As for activities outside Natura 2000 network to be implemented under the National Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation in the RB, if an opportunity for cross-border cooperation is identified in the Strategy, PE intends to encourage inter-regional cooperation and the exchange of good practices between beneficiaries from border regions with a clear demarcation with the CBC programmes.

Under the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea integration will be ensured of the objectives for management of the marine ecosystems and services and for improving the status of habitats and species with the objectives for sustainable coastal and marine resources management through the elaboration of protected sites management plans. The conservation measures will improve the ecological status of marine and freshwater ecosystems by addressing risks for coastal and marine resources and will develop the ecosystem services, such as restocking, fishery products and aquaculture, recreation, sports, tourism, etc.

The measures for the management bodies will contribute to Action 2 to Priority Area 6 of the EUSDR Action Plan, national and local authorities, NGOs, expert and scientific community.

Action 3 is related to development / implementation of conservation plans /management plans for endangered umbrella species of the Danube Region. Preserving their key habitats contributes to the protection of many other species. Measures for improving the status of habitats and species through pilot restoration of existing/potential wetlands and meanders along the Danube and its tributaries will also contribute.

The measures for removal /limitation of WIAS correspond to Action 4 to apply the most appropriate methods for prevention and control of IAS and for management of the priority pathways in line with the DIAS Strategy and IAS Regulation (EU) 1143/2014.

The support for species and habitats within the protected sites falling in the Black Sea region will contribute to preserve the marine biodiversity, which will have an effect on the quality of the marine environment of third countries.

*The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [1 000 ]*

Grants are envisaged under the Priority. The nature of the activities is not related to investments, which assume direct financial returns. The Ex-ante assessment of FIs does not identify applicability of financial instruments for these types of activities.

### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

*Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation*

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
Biodiversity	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	ERDF	Transition	RCO 37	Surface of Natura 2000 sites covered by protection and restoration measures	ha	115	9 775
			Less developed			ha	685	48 295
			Transition	Programme specific indicator 3.4	Investments to support measures outside Natura 2000	Euro	805 592,00	7 434 237,14
			Less developed				805 592,00	42 232 862,35



Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference year	Target (2029)	Source of data [200]	Comments [200]
Biodiversity	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	ERDF	Transition	Programme-specific indicator 3.1	Habitats with better conservation status	%	0	2021	2,5	Projects supported, PE MA	
			Less developed			%	0	2021	12,2		
			Transition	Programme-specific indicator 3.2	Species with better conservation status	%	0	2021	1,8	Projects supported, PE MA	
			Less developed			%	0	2021	9,00		
			Transition	Programme-specific indicator 3.3	Supported infrastructure for ex-situ protection	Number	0	2021	1	Projects supported, PE MA	
			Less developed			Number	0	2021	5		

### 2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention (not applicable to the EMFAF)

Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
3 Biodiversity	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	078 Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Natura 2000 sites	7 677 048,00
		Less developed			61 060 557,00
		Transition		079 Nature and biodiversity protection, natural heritage and resources green and blue infrastructure	1 953 966,00
		Less developed			14 402 544,00

		Transition		080 Other measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the area of preservation and restoration of natural areas with high potential for carbon absorption and storage, e.g. by rewetting of moorlands, the capture of landfill gas	3 250 000,00
		Less developed			21 495 389,00

Table 5: Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
3 Biodiversity	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	01 Grant	12 881 014,00
		Less developed			96 958 490,00

Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
3 Biodiversity	EFRD	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	33	12 881 014,00
		Less developed			96 958 490,00

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
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Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
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Table 8: Dimension 7 - ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
3 Biodiversity	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	03 Gender neutral	12 881 014,00
		Less developed			96 958 490,00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

### 2.1.1. Title of the priority [300]

#### Priority 4 “Risk and climate change”

<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to youth employment
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to social innovative actions
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation*
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation <sup>12</sup>
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to urban mobility specific objective set out in point (viii) of Article 3(1)(b) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to digital connectivity specific objective set out in point (v) of Article 3(1)(a) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation

\* If marked go to section 2.1.1.2.

#### 2.1.1.1. Specific objective<sup>13</sup> (repeated for each selected specific objective for priorities other than technical assistance)

**Specific objective:** “Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches”.

##### 2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

*The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:*

Text field [8 000]

<sup>12</sup> In case resources under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation are taken into account for the purposes of Article 7(4) ESF+ Regulation.

<sup>13</sup> Except for a specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation.

In relation to the identified scope of natural disasters as a consequence of climate change and the key steps for risk mitigation pointed out in strategic documents, the NDRMP above all, the following measures are eligible:

- Flood and drought risk prevention and management measures (with priority on green measures);
- Risk analyses, monitoring and implementation of prevention and protection measures concerning adverse geodynamic processes – landslides, erosion, abrasion, collapsible soils;
- Measures aimed at increasing the population preparedness for an adequate response and improving the resilience by ensuring wild fire-fighting capacity on the ground;
- Establishing new and optimizing and/or expanding existing warning, monitoring, reporting, forecasting and alarming systems; development of digital models, analyses and forecasts in relation to climate change such as:
  - further development and completion of the National Real Time Water Management System for the rest 12 main rivers;
  - expanding the System for early warning and announcement of the population (at NUTS 3 level) on the territory of the country, etc.;
  - Researches, analyses, digital models, prognoses and assessments, incl. regarding FRMPs development for the period 2028-2033, and other strategic, programme and planning documents.

The priorities with regard to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction set at global and European level (the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the new EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy) promote the selection of ecosystem-based approaches to increase population protection as an alternative to the standard “grey” solutions. Priority shall be given to the implementation of actions identified in the FRMPs for Areas with significant potential flood risk (for example establishment of operated polders and small buffer water catchment areas in the flood river terraces; restoration of water body links or the natural state of the river bed, old meanders, flood plains in order to increase the water retention; protection measures for river banks against erosion – gabion river bank protection, etc.).

It should be noted that the implementation of green measures under the priority contributes to the achievement of integrated river basin management according to the WFD as well as contributes to the objectives of the Floods Directive concerning actions planned under the RBMPs and FRMPs for natural water retention etc. These measures have a positive effect on the environment and water quality improvement, and on reducing drought effect – RBMPs requirement, and on the flood risk management – FRMPs objective. In addition, investments included in the RBMPs programme of measures and foreseen to be supported under priority 1 (incl. construction/reconstruction of sewerage systems) shall contribute to mitigate the negative effects of floods, drought and water scarcity. The reduction of water losses as a result of the investments planned in water supply infrastructure shall reduce the water abstraction as a measure directed to climate change adaptation.

In addition, this type of interventions has a favorable effect to biodiversity preservation when implemented in Natura 2000 protected sites. It should be taken into account that one of the main priorities when implementing protection measures against floods, included in the FRMPs, is to increase the environment protection. An objective of the priority is to minimize the affected water protecting areas, Natura 2000 protected sites and these under the Protected Areas Act.

As for the measures related to adverse geodynamic processes, they are eligible both in and outside urban areas and on the national road network, where they are identified as a threat to the life and health of the population (once in the light of road safety, but also related to environment with regard to the protection of the biodiversity). It should be noted that protection

measures related to adverse geodynamic processes are outlined as major actions to cope with earthquakes in the national strategic documents.

The measures focused on increasing the population preparedness envisage to upgrade the 6 centers supported in 2014-2020 with areas for practical preparation, equipped for prevention and response trainings in case of wild fires. These will provide theoretical and practical trainings for the population of the country together with methodologies to facilitate the available human and material resources management.

Besides the measures addressing the population preparedness to prevent and/or respond to wild fires along with information and awareness raising actions, PE supports the provision of fire-fighting capacity on the ground that will cover the needs for the territory of the country. The analyses show the lack of appropriate and modern technical equipment and machinery and personal protective equipment, necessary to ensure prevention and response capacity on the ground of the national fire-fighting units.

Interventions aimed at increasing the preparedness for an adequate response in combination with practical trainings for the population, information campaigns to raise public awareness and adequate equipment for the professionals, are key actions to cope with natural disasters, especially wildfires, according to the national strategic documents (NDRMP).

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.

#### **Forms of support:**

The investments envisaged are focused on risk prevention and preparedness for reaction in case of disaster. Potential beneficiaries are the national responsible bodies under the Bulgarian legislation. Taking into account the scope of the measures, the non-revenue generating nature of the projects with indirect economic benefits for a region/public as a result of the implementation, there is no potential to support the investments through financial instruments. The analysis made and the conclusions of the Ex-ante assessment of FIs justify the application of grant financing.

#### **Synergy and complementarity:**

##### **Cross-border cooperation (CBC) programmes**

The interventions under PE focused on raising the population preparedness, on information and awareness and provision of fire-fighting equipment are complemented by the measures planned for support under the CBC programmes. For CBC programmes, as far as it concerns investments in disaster risk reduction through trainings, methodology development, etc., the focus shall be on the professionals and volunteers as part of the responsible bodies for reaction in case of natural disaster crises.

The actions under PE shall contribute to the sustainability of projects supported under the CBC programmes and similar measures in the same areas shall be excluded from their scope. The envisaged interventions under the priority shall be implemented in clear demarcation and complementarity with strategic projects for disaster risk reduction under the CBC programmes.

##### **Strategic Plan for Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas**

A comprehensive approach addressing the risks of wildfires shall be ensured with the measures planned to be financed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The Strategic Plan for Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas shall focus on forest fire-fighting measures, identified in the annual forest fire protection plans, incl. fire monitoring, afforestation and reforestation contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

*The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:*

*Text field [1 000]*

Population of the Republic of Bulgaria, Unified Safety System's structures (ministries and agencies, municipalities, companies, emergency centers, non-profit organizations, volunteer organisations – all with the respective responsibilities for the prevention and response to natural disasters, as well as for the protection of human life and health).

The support under the priority shall be targeted to a wide range of potential beneficiaries according to their responsibilities and powers, e.g. municipalities, regional administrations (district government), Road Infrastructure Agency, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW), Structures of/within MoEW, National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (NIMH), Structures of/within Ministry of Interior, etc.

*Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

*Text field [2 000]*

Environmental protection and climate change adaptation are horizontal policies, focused on Bulgarian citizens as a main target group, regardless of their sex, race, or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. During the planning, assessment and implementation of the measures supported within this priority the equality, inclusion and non-discrimination principles are going to be applied. This priority supports natural disasters risk prevention and management, focused on protection of life and health of all Bulgarian citizens and on protection of the property.

*Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The interventions regarding floods target the Areas with significant potential flood risk. The forest fire prevention and reaction measures, however, target the whole territory of the country. The measures related to adverse geodynamic processes target municipal urban territories, when supporting landslides, and territories along the main road network – when addressing also other types of such processes, e.g. rockfalls, slope failures, etc.

Measures under the Priority can be implemented at territorial level through the ITI approach at NUTS 2 region. According to PE MA preliminary assessment, measures for flood risk prevention and management, as well as measures addressing adverse geodynamic processes in municipal areas are eligible for financing under the ITI approach. This will ensure a holistic approach towards their management, given the measures may be performed in a coordinated and complemented manner by the different responsible stakeholders (e.g. the municipal mayor – flood protection measures along the river on the territory of the municipality, and the regional governor – along the river on the territory of the region). In addition, the integrated territorial investments may be implemented in partnership including various actors such as economic operators, scientific communities, universities, etc. which may ensure sufficient level of competence when performing the actions.

The need of such measures at local and regional level should be identified in the integrated territorial strategies for development of the regions at NUTS2 level. The PE projects eligible under the ITI approach will be implemented on a concepts basis in possible partnership between different local stakeholders, in co-ordination with the other programmes, financing the relevant integrated concept. A specific demarcation between programmes and avoiding the risk of double financing will be provided at pre-selection stage by the Regional development councils as well as by the MA before signing the grant contracts.

*The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The activities related to researches, analyses, models, prognoses and assessments, incl. regarding FRMPs development contribute to Action 1: Provide sufficient support for development and execution of risk management plans for different hazards of Priority Area 5 of the EUSDR Action Plan. Establishing new and optimizing and/or expanding existing warning, monitoring, reporting, forecasting and alarming systems correspond to Action 2 of PA 5 of EUSDR Action Plan to enhance the capacities, extend the coverage of basin-wide or regional forecasting and warning systems, and develop rapid response procedures. The implementation of green measures contributes to Action 5 of PA 5 of the EUSDR Action Plan to anticipate regional and local impacts of climate change.

In addition, support under the priority has a direct contribution to the measures in the current Maritime Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria and to protection and restoration of the Black Sea with regard to the adverse geodynamic processes eligible activities, as well as to the FRMPs measures.

Given the specific measures and the clear demarcation needed between the supported actions under the priority and measures envisaged to be financed under the cross-border cooperation programmes, considering the amount and form of financing, it is not envisaged to implement joint projects and/or to provide resources to beneficiaries from regions other than the territory of the country for similar measures. The measures under the CBC programmes and actions implemented under PE “Risk and climate change” shall complement each other and provide a comprehensive approach to ensure awareness and adequate preparedness for disaster response.

*The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [1 000]*

The investments envisaged are focused on risk prevention and preparedness for reaction in case of disaster. Potential beneficiaries are the national responsible bodies under the Bulgarian legislation. Taking into account the scope of the measures, the non-revenue generating nature of the projects with indirect economic benefits for a region/public as a result of the implementation, there is no potential to support the investments through financial instruments. The analysis made and the conclusions of the Ex-ante assessment of FIs justify the application of grant financing.

### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

*Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation*

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measure unit	Milest one (2024)	Target (2029)
Risk and climate change	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	ERDF	Transition	RCO 24	Investments in new or upgraded disaster monitoring, preparedness, warning and response systems against natural disasters	Euro	2 665 865,00	13 994 595,00
			Less developed			Euro	6 552 685,00	34 396 804,00
			Transition	RCO 27	National and sub-national strategies addressing climate change adaptation	number	0	1
			Less developed			number	0	3
			Transition	4.1	Investments to support protection	euro	1 605 000,00	4 969 525,00

			Less developed		against adverse geodynamic processes - newly build or upgraded	euro	3 190 000,00	35 757 596,00
			Transition	RCO2 6	Green infrastructure built or upgraded for adaptation to climate change	ha	0	4
			Less developed			ha	0	276
			Transition	RCO2 8	Area covered by protection measures against wildfires	ha	0	994 882
			Less developed			ha	0	3 552 443

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference year	Target (2029)	Source of data [200]	Comments [200]
Risk and climate change	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	ERDF	Transition	RCR 35	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	persons	0	2021	534 000	Project supported, PE MA	
			Less developed			persons	0	2021	1 971 000		
			Transition	RCR 36	Population benefiting from wildfire protection measures	persons	0	2021	10 370	Project supported, PE MA	
			Less developed			persons	0	2021	15 230		
			Transition	4.2	Population benefiting from protection measures against natural disasters	persons	0	2021	287 500	Project supported, PE MA	
			Less developed			persons	0	2021	728 500		

#### 2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention (not applicable to the EMFAF)

Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
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4 Risk and climate change	ERDF	Transition	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	058 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks: floods and landslides (including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, infrastructures and ecosystem approaches)	13 573 004,00
		Less developed			87 239 085,00
		Transition		059 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks: fires (including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems, infrastructures and ecosystem approaches)	12 344 194,00
		Less developed			73 083 971,00

Table 5: Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
4 Risk and climate change	ERDF	Transition	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	01 Grant	25 917 198,00
		Less developed			160 323 056,00

Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
4 Risk and climate change	ERDF	Transition	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and	08	6 550 952,00
		Less developed			53 235 484,00

		Transition	resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	33	19 366 246,00
		Less developed			107 087 572,00

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
4 Risk and climate change	ERDF	Transition	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	03 Gender neutral	25 917 198,00
		Less developed			160 323 056,00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

### 2.1.1. Title of the priority [300]

#### Priority 5 “Air”

<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to youth employment
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to social innovative actions
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation*
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to support to the most deprived persons under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation <sup>14</sup>
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to urban mobility specific objective set out in point (viii) of Article 3(1)(b) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation
<input type="checkbox"/> This is a priority dedicated to digital connectivity specific objective set out in point (v) of Article 3(1)(a) of the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation

\* If marked go to section 2.1.1.2.

#### 2.1.1.1. Specific objective<sup>15</sup> (repeated for each selected specific objective for priorities other than technical assistance)

**Specific objective:** “Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution”.

<sup>14</sup> In case resources under the specific objective set out in point (l) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation are taken into account for the purposes of Article 7(4) ESF+ Regulation.

<sup>15</sup> Except for a specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) ESF+ Regulation.

### 2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

*The related types of actions – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:*

*Text field [8 000]*

- Measures addressing reduction of air pollution from domestic heating - gradual replacement of solid fuel (coal and wood) heaters with environmentally friendly alternatives (with priority to energy efficient homes); a small pilot procedure for promoting the use of renewables, green hydrogen and other innovative alternatives;
- Measures, addressing reduction of air pollution from transport – introduction of low emission zones;
- Measures addressing secondary dusting – green infrastructure in urban areas;
- Improvement of ambient air quality (AAQ) monitoring, upgrade of the National AAQ Real Time Monitoring System and the Information AAQ Data Reporting System;
- Development/update of strategic/programme/planning/analytical documents, regarding AAQ, amendments in the Air Protection Act and the relevant secondary legislation, development of roadmaps under Directive (EC) 2024/2881, carrying out scientific studies, forecasting, modelling;
- Establishment of a National Network of Air Quality Experts.

The focus of the interventions will be on municipalities with poor air quality, as a main priority are those that fall within the scope of the Judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union in case C-488/15 of 5 April 2017 on non-compliance with the norms for PM<sub>10</sub> and the non-compliance with the obligations under Directive 2008/50/EC and having registered excessive levels of the average daily norms and/or the average annual concentrations of PM reported in 2017-2021 period. Support for measures addressing sources of air pollution is also eligible for municipalities where there are no permanent monitoring points, but excessive pollution has been registered under the PM<sub>10</sub> indicator with the mobile automatic stations of the Executive Environment Agency (EEA-BG).

The measure for replacement of solid fuel heaters is a key one, given the highest effectiveness and the expected fastest direct result in terms of reducing PM emissions, which are the cause of premature death of over 12 thousand Bulgarian citizens in 2018, according to the European Environment Agency's (EEA) 2020 Air Quality Report. Alternative heating will exclude fossil fuels. A small pilot procedure shall promote innovative alternatives of solid fuel heaters, including renewable energy, green hydrogen, etc., where applicable. According to EEA Report No 22/2018 areas with lower socio-economic status, tend to have higher levels of PM pollution. One of the findings is that in Bulgaria nearly 40% of all households have difficulties in providing heating for their homes. Therefore, different factors will be subject to prioritization when selecting final recipients, such as energy efficiency of the dwelling, heating aids received and investment efficiency in terms of unit cost for saved PM emissions in order to cover as many households as possible. For air quality purposes, only for households that receive aids for heating, support will be applicable for photovoltaic installations (incl. batteries) under a condition that the new heating alternative is an air-to-air heat pump. This will lead to a significant reduction of the household's electricity costs on an annual basis. This approach will also have an additional contribution to the Integrated National Plan on Energy and Climate targets on the proportion of renewable energy for the "electricity", "heating" and "cooling" sectors with 1 ktoe). Investments in gas are not eligible, as well as support for wood/coal stoves, even if they meet the ecodesign requirements, is ineligible.

The funding for the introduction of low-emission zones will be concentrated in cities with poor air quality and significant traffic problems, set out in the NAQMP 2018-2024 or with justified relevant measures in the municipal AAQ programmes. The introduction of low-emission zones

shall contribute to the electromobility reform envisaged in the RRP, as the restriction of the access of high-emission motor vehicles to the most heavily used zones shall reduce air pollution and noise through stimulating the use of public transport, electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids.

Green infrastructure includes green walls, green areas, landscaping of “mud spots”, green roofs, etc., including intelligent green solutions. The measures will have an additional positive effect also given the findings in the National Biodiversity Strategy that in Bulgaria the indicator “green areas per person” in large settlements varies from 3-15 sq.m./person., which is far from the European requirements for 20 sq.m. green areas per person. The focus is on the air quality through investments in plant species with highest effectiveness with regard to the capture of PM and air purification.

The improvement of air quality monitoring supports the modernization and upgrade of the National Real Time Air Quality Monitoring System managed by the EEA-BG. A significant part of the equipment has been in operation for more than 15 years. The upgrade and the provision of modern equipment will lead to improved data quality, incl. real time data, etc. No expansion of the system will be supported.

The National Network of Air Quality Experts is key, given the enhancing capacity measures will be directed to the beneficiaries and authorities engaged in the development and implementation of policies related to air quality, including the control over their implementation.

The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.

### **Forms of support**

When replacing heating devices the demand is interlinked either with the necessity to comply with regulatory requirements or is stimulated by grants. Given there is no regulatory ban to use solid fuel in Bulgaria, grant is applicable. The implementation of a FIs will significantly reduce the attractiveness of the measure as the final beneficiaries will have to ensure own contribution. Taking into account that the measure depends on the willingness of the final recipients and the infringement procedures against Bulgaria regarding air quality, application of FIs is unfounded. It also has to be considered that the households’ purchase capacity is limited - wood/coal is usually used by low-income and socially disadvantaged groups.

For the other measures under the Priority grants are envisaged given they are not revenue generating, nor cost saving interventions and the Ex-ante assessment of FIs does not identify applicability of financial instruments for these types of activities.

### **Synergy and complementarity:**

The main objective of the measures under PE 2021-2027 is achieving compliance with the requirements of the legislation in the field of ambient air quality. The main measure will complement and upgrade the results under LIFE-IP Clean Air project (especially the use of eco-managers/advice as a good practice) and the OPE 2014-2020 investments in replacement of solid fuel heaters. The measures for energy efficiency under the different funding options – Cohesion Policy programmes, RRP, etc., will have additional contribution to this major objective by complementing the main interventions that address domestic heating.

### **Programme “Development of Regions” (PDR)**

The programme envisages energy efficiency measures in housing and public buildings. The improved energy efficiency of the buildings will result in lower energy consumption, which also contributes to reduction of air pollution emissions. With regard to air pollution from transport, PDR supports also the replacement of public transport fleet. As for the green measures, the programme covers overall interventions for green areas, incl. parks, lanes, resting spots, etc.

### **Programme “Transport Connectivity”**

The measures relate to intermodality in urban environment and construction of e-charging infrastructure along the main national road network.

### **Recovery and Resilience Plan**

The Plan envisages energy efficiency measures in housing through ensuring support for investments in renewable energy sources in single and multi-family residential buildings no matter the heating source. PE 2021-2027 supports investments in photovoltaics only for households living in energy poverty, using solid fuel for heating in municipalities with excessive levels of norms reported in 2017-2021 period.

Support under PE is for photovoltaic systems up to 4 kW, on-grid systems with batteries. Under RRP – up to 10 kW with batteries.

For the similar measures funded under the RRP and PE, where there is not yet a clear delineation, adequate arrangements will be put in place to avoid double counting and double funding from the RRF and PE. This includes setting up an effective control system for the implementation of the different measures, such as adequate information exchange between the implementing authorities.

*The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:*

*Text field [1 000]*

Citizens of municipalities with poor air quality, as well as public structures responsible for the development and implementation of policies and activities related to air quality, including control over their implementation, the population of the country in general.

The potential eligible beneficiaries are municipalities, Executive Environment Agency, Association of environmental experts from the municipalities in Bulgaria (for training and information-educational measures; establishment of a network of experts in the field of air quality), MOEW structures.

*Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

*Text field [2 000]*

Environmental protection and climate change adaptation are horizontal policies, focused on Bulgarian citizens as a main target group, regardless of their sex, race, or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. During the planning, assessment and implementation of the measures supported within this priority the equality, inclusion and non-discrimination principles are going to be applied. This priority supports ambient air quality improvement investments aiming at health protection of all citizens in Republic of Bulgaria.

*Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The only territories that will be targeted are municipalities with poor air quality as per the infringement procedure under Judgment of the EU Court Case C-488/15 of 05.04.2017. The eligible municipalities are with exceedances of the limit values in 2017-2021 period and with elaborated Air Quality Management Plans.

Measures under the Priority can be implemented at territorial level through the ITI approach at NUTS 2 regions. According to PE MA preliminary assessment, green measures in urban areas, incl. establishment of “green belts/zones” on the territories of municipalities with poor AAQ, in compliance and demarcation with measures, financed under PDR, are eligible.

The need for such measures at local and regional level should be identified in the integrated territorial development strategies for NUTS 2 regions. Demarcation between programmes and avoiding the risk of double financing will be provided at the pre-selection stage by the Regional development councils and by each MA before signing the grant contracts.

*The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [2 000]*

The envisaged activities contribute to Action 9 of Priority Area 6 of the EUSDR Action Plan. This action refers to taking measures to gradually reduce air pollution, with as a minimum step to respect the limit values for pollutants according to the Air Quality Directive. As a potential measure to deal with the existing gaps the promotion of sustainable use of biomass for heating in the domestic sector is outlined, namely the eligible activity for replacement of heating devices on solid fuel.

Main focus of the interventions under the priority will be on municipalities with poor air quality, that fall within the scope of the Judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union in case C-488/15 of 5 April 2017 on non-compliance with the norms for PM10 and the non-compliance with the obligations under Directive 2008/50/EC and registered excessive levels of the average daily norms and/or the average annual concentrations of PM reported in 2017-2021 period. Given the specific territorial scope of the supported action (21 municipalities) the implementation of joint projects and/or allocation of resources towards beneficiaries in regions outside the country territory are not envisaged.

Nevertheless, given the nature of the problems with the air quality to be addressed under the priority, the planned eligible measures are expected to have potential benefits to the environment and human health on the territory of the neighbouring countries, especially when applied in cross-border areas.

*The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [1 000]*

When replacing heating devices the demand is interlinked either with the necessity to comply with regulatory requirements or is stimulated by grants. Given there is no regulatory ban to use solid fuel in Bulgaria, grant is applicable. The implementation of a FIs will significantly reduce the attractiveness of the measure as the final beneficiaries will have to ensure own contribution. Taking into account that the measure depends on the willingness of the final recipients and the infringement procedures against Bulgaria regarding air quality, application of FIs is unfounded. It also has to be considered that the households' purchase capacity is limited - wood/coal is usually used by low-income and socially disadvantaged groups.

For the other measures under the Priority grants are envisaged given they are not revenue generating, nor cost saving interventions and the Ex-ante assessment of FIs does not identify applicability of financial instruments for these types of activities.

### 2.1.1.1.2 Indicators

*Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation*

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
Air	Enhancing protection and	ERDF	Transition	RCO 36	Green infrastructure	ha	0	67,23

	preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution		Less developed		supported for other purposes than adaptation to climate change	ha	19,43	686,14
		CF	N/A			ha	10,98	137,99
		ERDF	Transition	5.2	Dwellings with replaced solid fuel heating installations	Number	NA	NA
			Less developed			Number	2 923	69 085
		CF	N/A			Number	1 667	19 078
		ERDF	Transition	RCO22	Additional production capacity for renewable energy (of which: electricity, thermal)	MW	NA	NA
			Less developed			MW	0	7,17
		CF	N/A			MW	0	1,97

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Base line or reference value	Reference year	Target (2029)	Source of data [200]	Comments [200]
Air	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	ERDF	Transition	RCR 50	Population benefiting from measures for air quality	persons	N/A	N/A	N/A	Supported projects, PE MA	
			Less developed				0	2021	1 392 919		
		CF	NA			persons	0	2021	1 361 468		
		ERDF	Transition	5.1	Saved PM <sub>10</sub> emissions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Supported projects, PE MA	
			Less developed			t/y	0	2021	1 123,75		
		CF	N.A.			t/y	0	2021	310,92		
		ERDF	Transition	RCR 31	Total renewable energy produced (electricity)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Supported projects, PE MA	
			Less developed			MWh/year	0	2021	9 323,21		
		CF	N.A.			MWh/year	0	2021	2 562,23		

**2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention**  
(not applicable to the EMFAF)

*Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)		
5 Air	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	077 Air quality and noise reduction measures	1 135 160,00		
		Less developed			205 144 392,00		
	CF	NA			65 739 132,00		
	ERDF	Transition		048 Renewable energy: solar	0,00		
		Less developed			14 502 941,00		
	CF	NA			3 985 746,00		
	ERDF	Transition		080 Other measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the area of preservation and restoration of natural areas with high potential for carbon absorption and storage, e.g. by rewetting of moorlands, the capture of landfill gas	2 082 737,00		
		Less developed			35 923 892,00		
	CF				6 944 546,00		

Table 5: Dimension 2 – form of financing

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
5 Air	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	01 Grant	3 217 897,00
		Less developed			255 571 225,00
	CF			01 Grant	76 669 424,00

Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
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5 Air	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	08	2 082 738,00
		Less developed			18 510 400,00
		Transition		33	1 135 159,00
		Less developed			237 060 825,00
	CF			33	76 669 424,00

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Specific objective	Code	Amount (EUR)
5 Air	ERDF	Transition	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	03 Gender neutral	3 217 897,00
		Less developed			255 571 225,00
	CF				76 669 424,00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

#### 2.1.1.1.4. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

*Reference: point (c) of Article 22(3) CPR*

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Priority No	Specific objective	Type of intervention	Code	Amount (EUR)
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

#### 2.1.1.2. Specific objective addressing material deprivation

##### 2.1.1.2.1. Interventions of the Funds

Reference: Article 22(3) CPR and Article 20 and Article 23(1) and (2) ESF+ Regulation

*Types of support*

<i>Text field [2 000]</i>
<i>Main target groups</i>
<i>Text field [2 000]</i>
<i>Description of the national or regional schemes of support</i>
<i>Text field [2 000]</i>
<i>Criteria for the selection of operations<sup>16</sup></i>
<i>Text field [4 000]</i>

## 2.1.1.2.2. Indicators

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 3: Result indicators

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Reference value	Reference year	Source of data [200]	Comments [200]
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

## 2.2. Technical assistance priorities

**2.2.1. Priority for technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(4) CPR** (repeated for each such technical assistance priority)

*Reference: point (e) of Article 22(3) CPR*

### 2.2.1.1. Intervention from the Funds

*The related types of actions – point (e)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [8 000]*

Technical Assistance priority provides support for the processes influencing programme effective implementation by applying the lessons learnt, experience and expertise gained during the previous two programming periods.

**Indicative measures to improve the capacity of the (potential) beneficiaries, the relevant stakeholders and the MA:** the effective implementation requires a specific capacity for preparation and management of projects in the environmental sector. Analyses are planned to identify gaps and needs in order to address them effectively, with an emphasis on more strategic and targeted support throughout the project cycle. Introduction of regular communication and consultations at local and regional level between representatives of the MA and (potential) beneficiaries and their partners. The lessons learnt in the period 2014-2020 show that more efforts are needed to improve the capacity of Water priority beneficiaries, in particular WSS

<sup>16</sup> Only for programmes limited to the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1)(xi) of the ESF+ Regulation.

operators. Good practice for cooperation with international institutions with proven expertise to increase administrative capacity, strategic planning, research, analyses etc. will continue. •

*Activities to strengthen the capacity of (potential) beneficiaries and their partners:* activities not limited to presentations only, but providing also practicalities. The measures relate to design and implementation of specific training programmes (incl. online) with an emphasis on the preparation and implementation of infrastructural projects, hiring experts and speakers, workshops, exchange of experience and good practices, presenting environmental legislation novelties and requirements as well as and the respective responsibilities of the beneficiaries, elaboration and dissemination of training materials, provision of methodological assistance and written instructions on the requirements for project preparation and subsequent sustainable management of the acquired assets/results, etc. In order to reduce the administrative burden, actions are envisaged such as development of new procedures or update of the existing ones to correspond to the new requirements, e.g. regarding the technical and financial implementation of the projects and their further reporting, the new functionalities of UMIS2020, application of SCOs for project management and communication.

Sample topics: introductory trainings after grant contracting – PE reporting documents, indicators; application of the Spatial Planning Act and the FIDIC terms, implementation of green public procurement, financial and technical dimensions of the WSS services/assets management, in order to achieve the target indicators for quality and efficiency of the provided services; implementing financial instruments and improving the creditworthiness and combining different financial sources; etc.

- *Activities to strengthen and maintain the capacity of MA staff:* focus on the PE management, OPE 2014-2020 closure, the prompt preparation of the 2028+ period. The reinforcement of MA capacity takes into account the elaborated Strategy for development of the administrative capacity of the MA staff for the period 2020-2023, together with an Implementation Plan. After 2023 the Strategy may be upgraded based on the accumulated experience and the need for additional knowledge and skills. The measures relate to performing in-dept analysis, design and implementation of training programmes; organization of practical seminars (incl. online), trainings, working meetings, exchange of experience and good practices.

Sample topics (depending on the officials' specific operational and professional competencies): project evaluation, use of financial instruments; improved public procurement performance of PE concluded grant contracts; functional trainings for the respective departments; participation in EC-led trainings, forums, conferences, meetings; organisation and participation in joint seminars with national and other EU member states MAs; logistic of business trips (accommodation, transport, subsistence, participation fees) etc.

- *Activities to strengthen the capacity and interaction with the relevant stakeholders – MC members, media, NGOs, civil society:* capacity building and interaction with stakeholders involved in PE implementation are key, as the partners have proven their worth to contribute for taking respective decisions. These are not only the MC members, but also the bodies responsible for the specific policies, etc. The measures relate to organizing and conducting trainings, workshops, roundtables for MC and subgroups within the MC (incl. online), public consultations, presentation of good practices and field visits of PE financed projects, exchange of information, experience and knowledge, organization of open public discussions, other events for sectoral stakeholders, media and civil sector organizations and necessary logistical and technical support. After consulting and assessing appropriate investments, the added value for the timely implementation of the respective projects under the programme will be considered, as well as the use of applicable tools for civil monitoring.

Sample topics: presenting good practices and defining common approaches in assessing the eligibility of investment intentions with regard to the RBMPs and FRMPs, as well as in monitoring the implementation of permits.

**Indicative measures to improve the Programme management and administration in order to ensure an efficient implementation system:**

Activities related to preparation, implementation, evaluation, monitoring, and control of the programme, good working environment and expert and motivated human resources shall be supported. Where relevant, an external services and expertise is foreseen. The recruitment and retention of highly qualified and experienced staff will be a condition for the optimal programme implementation and will achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in its absorption. The basic precondition for having stable implementation framework is the provision of appropriate working conditions, experience and know-how, together with a fair and sufficiently motivating remuneration mechanism, through application of a quality and transparent performance evaluation system. These measures will contribute to staff greater commitment and motivation, improved working environment for the implementation of the programme, facilitating quality processes management. Sample measures: outsourced activities, related to assessments, analyses, studies, research, data collection, project evaluation and selection (organization of evaluation committees, hiring external experts); monitoring, financial control and audit, risk assessment, anti-fraud measures, irregularities, anti-corruption; legal and translation services; PE evaluations; closure of OPE 2014-2020 and preparation of 2028+ programme; remunerations of the staff engaged in the programme management, planning, monitoring, evaluation, control, in accordance with the national legislation or the developed rules (and associated expenses); logistic and technical provision of the facilities, material and technical equipment, management information systems and software programmes, necessary for PE management (if needed); other activities related to ensuring the PE implementation.

**Indicative measures to achieve an effective and efficient communication, visibility and transparency:** main focus is the development of environmental awareness among all interested parties, general public, pupils and students. The good practices continue for information campaigns on key procedures and regular cooperation with media and information networks. A 2020 sociological survey shows that additional actions should be initiated for communication of the Programme measures and results to the media and also the NGOs, which have a leading role in informing on environmental protection activities. The regular information on the benefits for the individual citizen should be maintained. The measures relate to:

- providing visibility and communication, according to the Annual action plans and ensuring cooperation with partners, through organising of national information campaigns, information days and events, conferences, public consultations; dedicated inauguration events at the start of the operations of strategic importance, during their progress and completion (in cooperation with electronic, social, print media); events for media and for the civil society organisations (e.g. press-conferences, media trainings, public discussions, etc.); media coverage; interaction with information networks as District Information Centers (DICs), EC representations and EP Liaison Office, EU based networks, Europe Direct etc.;
- conducting sociological surveys, training and information campaigns in online platforms; production and distribution of promotion and information materials and elaboration of audio and video clips;
- logistic support for the exchange of experience and good practices with other EU Member States, incl. through the TAIEX-REGIO PEER 2 PEER initiative.

**Synergy and complementarity:**

- **TA priority:** practical trainings on the specifics of PE project preparation, application, implementation, reporting and completion, in terms of the sectoral legislation and the environmental and climate change policies;

- **Technical Assistance Programme:** increase the capacity for coordination, management, control and audit and other horizontal topics, e.g. state aid, common mistakes in tendering, anti-corruption, detection of irregularities, UMIS and others.

*The main target groups - point (e)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

*Text field [1 000]*

The general public, mass media representatives, partners within the Thematic Working Group and MC members; potential beneficiaries, beneficiaries and their partners; stakeholders, the administration responsible for environmental and climate change policies; and structures supporting the implementation of the programme; students (in school and university). The MA of the programme shall be a direct beneficiary under the TA priority.

## 2.2.1.2. Indicators

### Output indicators with the corresponding milestones and targets

*Reference: point (e)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

Table 2: Output indicators

Priority	Fund	Category of region	ID [5]	Indicator [255]	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
Technical assistance	ERDF	Transition	TA1	Officials of (potential) beneficiaries/partners trained to increase their administrative capacity	persons	10	388
		Less developed				110	422
		Transition	TA2	Trainings for MA officials to increase administrative capacity	number	4	115
		Less developed				36	125
		Transition	TA3	MA officials supported by TA	persons	10	58
		Less developed				105	63
		Transition	TA4	Information campaigns held	number	0	3
		Less developed				1	3
		Transition	TA5	Carried out internal and external evaluations under the programme	number	0	2
		Less developed				1	2

## 2.2.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention

*Reference: point (e)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR*

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
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6 Technical assistance	ERDF	Transition	179 Information and communication	1 072 459,00
		Less developed		1 167 541,00
		Transition	180 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control	11 634 270,00
		Less developed		12 665 730,00
		Transition	181 Evaluation and studies, data collection	1 196 941,00
		Less developed		1 303 059,00
		Transition	182 Reinforcement of the capacity of Member State authorities, beneficiaries and relevant partners	1 436 330,00
		Less developed		1 563 670,00

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
6 Technical assistance	ERDF	Transition	03 Gender neutral	15 340 000,00
		Less developed		16 700 000,00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Priority No	Specific objective	Type of intervention	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

### 2.2.2. Priority for technical assistance pursuant to Article 37 CPR (repeated for each such technical assistance priority)

Reference: point (f) of Article 22(3) CPR

#### 2.2.2.1. Description of technical assistance under financing not linked to costs – Article 37 CPR

Text field [3 000] NA

#### 2.2.2.2. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: point (f) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 4: Dimension 1 – intervention field

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension

Priority No	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100% is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+ Regulation as well as programme specific actions in gender equality.

Table 9: Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention for EMFAF

Priority No	Specific objective	Type of intervention	Code	Amount (EUR)
Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

### 3. Financing plan

Reference: points (g)(i), (ii) and (iii) of Article 22(3), Article 112(1), (2) and (3), and Articles 14 and 26 CPR

#### 3.1. Transfers and contributions<sup>17</sup>

Reference: Articles 14, 26 and 27 CPR

Programme amendment related to	<input type="checkbox"/> contribution to InvestEU
	<input type="checkbox"/> transfer to instruments under direct or indirect management
	<input type="checkbox"/> transfer between ERDF, ESF+, Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds

Table 15A: Contributions to InvestEU\* (breakdown by year)

Contribution from		Contribution to	Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region	InvestEU window(s)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
ERDF	More developed									
	Transition									
	Less developed									
ESF+	More developed									
	Transition									
	Less developed									

<sup>17</sup> Applicable only to programme amendments in accordance with Articles 14 and 26 except complementary transfers to the JTF in accordance with Article 27 CPR. Transfers shall not affect the annual breakdown of financial appropriations at the MFF level for a Member State.

CF	N/A									
EMFAF	N/A									

\* For each new request for contribution, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts for each year by Fund and by category of region.

**Table 15B: Contributions to InvestEU\* (summary)**

	Category of region	Window 1 Sustainable Infrastructure (a)	Window 2 Innovation and Digitisation (b)	Window 3 SME (c)	Window 4 Social Investment and Skills (d)	Total (f)=(a)+(b)+(c)+(d)
ERDF	More developed					
	Less developed					
	Transition					
ESF+	More developed					
	Less developed					
	Transition					
Cohesion Fund	N/A					
EMFAF	N/A					
Total						

\* Cumulative amounts for all contributions done through programme amendments during the programming period. With each new request for contribution, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts for each year by Fund and by category of region.

*Text field [3500]* (justification), taking into account how those amount contribute to the achievement of policy objectives selected in the programme in accordance with Article 10(1) of the InvestEU Regulation.

**Table 16A: Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management (breakdown by year)**

Transfer from		Transfer to	Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
ERDF	More developed									
	Transition									
	Less developed									
ESF+	More developed									
	Transition									
	Less developed									
Cohesion Fund	N/A									
EMFAF	N/A									

**Table 16B: Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management\* (summary)**

Fund	Category of regions	Instrument 1 (a)	Instrument 2 (b)	Instrument 3 (c)	Instrument 4 (d)	Instrument 5** (e)	Total (f)=(a)+(b)+(c)+(d)+(e)
ERDF	More developed						
	Transition						



	Less developed						
ESF+	More developed						
	Transition						
	Less developed						
Cohesion Fund	N/A						
EMFAF	N/A						
Total							

\* Cumulative amounts for all transfers done through programme amendments during programming period. With each new request for transfer, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts transferred for each year by Fund and by category of region.

\*\* Transfers may be made to any other instrument under direct or indirect management, where such possibility is provided for in the basic act. Number and names of the relevant Union instruments will be specified accordingly.

Text field [3500] (justification)

**Table 17A: Transfers between ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds\* (breakdown by year)**

Transfers from		Transfers to		Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region	Fund	Category of region (where relevant)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
ERDF	More developed	ERDF, ESF+ or Cohesion Fund, EMFAF, AMIF, ISF, BMVI									
	Transition										
	Less developed										
ESF+	More developed										
	Transition										
	Less developed										
Cohesion Fund	N/A										
EMFAF	N/A										

\* Transfer to other programmes. Transfers between ERDF and ESF+ can only be done within the same category of region.

**Table 17B: Transfers between ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds\* (summary)**

		ERDF			ESF+			Cohesion Fund	EMFAF	AMIF	ISF	BMVI	Total
		More developed	Transition	Less developed	More developed	Transition	Less developed						
ERDF	More developed												
	Transition												
	Less developed												
ESF+	More developed												
	Transition												

	Less developed												
<b>Cohesion Fund</b>	N/A												
<b>EMFA F</b>	N/A												
<b>Total</b>													

\* Cumulative amounts for all transfers done through programme amendments during the programming period. With each new request for transfer, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts transferred for each year by Fund and by category of region.

Text field [3500] (justification)

### 3.2. JTF: allocation in the programme and transfers<sup>18</sup>

#### 3.2.1 JTF allocation to the programme prior to transfers by priority (where relevant)<sup>19</sup>

Reference: Article 27 CPR

**Table 18: JTF allocation to the programme in accordance to Article 3, JTF Regulation, prior to transfers**

JTF priority 1	
JTF priority 2	
	Total

#### 3.2.2 Transfers to the JTF as complementary support<sup>20</sup> (where relevant)

Transfer to JTF	<input type="checkbox"/> concerns internal transfers within the programme with JTF allocation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> concerns transfers from other programmes to the programme with JTF allocation	

**Table 18A: Transfers to the JTF within the programme (breakdown by year)**

Transfer from		Transfer to	Breakdown by year							
	Category of region	JTF priority *	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
ERDF	More developed	JTF priority 1								
	Transition									
	Less developed									
ESF+	More developed	JTF priority 2								
	Transition									
	Less developed									

<sup>18</sup> Transfers shall not affect the annual breakdown of financial appropriations at the MFF level for a Member State.

<sup>19</sup> Applicable to the first adoption of programmes with JTF allocation.

<sup>20</sup> Section to be filled in by receiving programme. Where a programme supported by the JTF receives complementary support (cf. Article 27 CPR) within the programme and from other programmes all tables in this section need to be filled in. At the first adoption with JTF allocation, this section is to confirm or correct the preliminary transfers proposed in the Partnership Agreement

\*JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

**Table 18B: Transfer of ERDF and ESF+ resources to the JTF within the programme**

		JTF allocation in the programme* broken down by category of region, which territory located** in (by JTF priority)	
		JTF priority (for each JTF priority)	Amount
Transfer within the programme* (complementary support) per category of region			
ERDF	More developed		
	Transition		
	Less developed		
ESF+	More developed		
	Transition		
	Less developed		
Total	More developed		
	Transition		
	Less developed		

\* Programme with the JTF allocation.

\*\*JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

**Table 18C: Transfers to the JTF from the other programme(s) (breakdown by year)**

Transfer from		Transfer to	Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
ERDF	More developed	JTF priority 1*								
	Transition									
	Less developed									
ESF+	More developed	JTF priority 2								
	Transition									
	Less developed									

\*JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

**Table 18D: Transfer of ERDF and ESF+ resources from other programmes to the JTF in this programme**

		Complementary support to the JTF in this programme* to the territory located*** in a given category of region (by priority):	
		JTF priority	Amount
Transfer(s) from other programme(s)** per category of region			
ERDF	More developed		
	Transition		
	Less developed		
ESF+	More developed		
	Transition		
	Less developed		
Total			

\* Programme with JTF allocation, which receives complementary support from the ERDF and ESF+.

\*\* Programme providing the complementary support from the ERDF and ESF+ (source).

\*\*\*JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

*Text field [3 000]* Justification for the complementary transfer from ERDF and ESF+ based on the planned types of interventions – point (d)(ix) of Article 22(3) CPR

### 3.3. Transfers between categories of region resulting from the mid-term review

**Table 19A: Transfers between categories of region resulting from the mid-term review, within the programme (breakdown by year)**

Transfer from	Transfer to	Breakdown by year			
Category of region*	Category of region*	2025	2026	2027	Total
More developed	More developed				
Transition	/				
Less developed	Transition / Less developed				

\*Applicable to ERDF and ESF+ only.

**Table 19B: Transfers between categories of region resulting from the mid-term review, to other programmes (breakdown by year)**

Transfer from	Transfer to	Breakdown by year			
Category of region*	Category of region*	2025	2026	2027	Total
More developed	More developed				
Transition	/				
Less developed	Transition / Less developed				

\*Applicable to ERDF and ESF+ only.

### 3.4. Transfers back<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Applicable only to programme amendments for resources transferred back from other Union instruments, including elements of AMIF, ISF and BMVI, under direct or indirect management, or from Invest EU.

**Table 20A: Transfers back (breakdown by year)**

Transfer from	Transfer to		Breakdown by year							
InvestEU or other EU instrument	Fund	Category of region	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
InvestEU window 1 window 2 window 3 window 4 Union instrument 1 Union instrument 2 [...]	ERDF	More developed								
		Transition								
		Less developed								
	ESF+	More developed								
		Transition								
		Less developed								
	Cohesin Fund	N/A								
	EMFAF	N/A								

**Table 20B: Transfers back\* (summary)**

From/ To	ERDF			ESF+			Cohesion Fund	EMFAF
	More developed	Transition	Less developed	More developed	Transition	Less developed		
InvestEU								
Window 1								
Window 2								
Window 3								
Window 4								
Instrument 1								
Instrument 2								
Instrument 3								





Fund	Category of region	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026		2026 for EMFA F only	2027		2027 for EMFA F only	Total
							Financial appropriation without flexibility amount	Flexibility amount		Financial appropriation without flexibility amount	Flexibility amount		
	n resources												
	Article 7 JTF Regulation resources (related to Article 3 JTF Regulation resources)												
	Article 7 JTF Regulation resources (related to Article 4 JTF Regulation resources)												
<b>Total</b>													
<b>Cohesion Fund</b>	N/A		22 625	40 625	86 947 829,00	86 947 829,00	30 661 415,00	30 661 415,00		30 661 414,00	30 661 414,00		359 791 316,00





	Priority 1 Water	P	ERDF	More developed								
				Transition	936 975,00	761 217,00	175 758,00	401 561,00	401 561,00	0,00	1 338 536,00	69.9999850583%
				Less developed	323 842 943,00	261 982 644,00	61 860 299,00	57 148 755,00	57 148 755,00	0,00	380 991 698,00	84.9999999213%
				Outermost and northern sparsely populated								
	Priority 2 Waste	P		Transition	26 338 000,00	21 397 529,00	4 940 471,00	11 287 715,00	11 287 715,00	0,00	37 625 715,00	69.9999986711%
				Less developed	233 771 979,00	189 116 985,00	44 654 994,00	41 253 879,00	41 253 879,00	0,00	275 025 858,00	84.9999998909%
	Priority 3 Biodiversity	P		Transition	12 881 014,00	10 464 799,00	2 416 215,00	5 520 435,00	5 520 435,00	0,00	18 401 449,00	69.9999983697%
				Less developed	96 958 490,00	78 437 533,00	18 520 957,00	17 110 322,00	17 110 322,00	0,00	114 068 812,00	84.9999998247%
	Priority 4 Risk and climate change	P		Transition	25 917 198,00	21 055 661,00	4 861 537,00	11 107 371,00	11 107 371,00	0,00	37 024 569,00	69.9999991897%
				Less developed	160 323 056,00	129 698 235,00	30 624 821,00	28 292 305,00	28 292 305,00	0,00	188 615 361,00	84.9999995493%
	Priority 5 Air	P	ESF+	Transition	3 217 897,00	2 614 285,00	603 612,00	1 379 099,00	1 379 099,00	0,00	4 596 996,00	69.9999956493%
				Less developed	255 571 225,00	206 752 151,00	48 819 074,00	45 100 805,0000	45 100 805,0000	0,00	300 672 030,00	84.9999998337%
	Priority 2			More developed								
				Transition								
				Less developed								
				Outermost and northern								

				sparsely populated								
	Priority 3		JTF**	Article 3 JTF Regulation resources								
				Article 4 JTF Regulation resources								
				Total								
	Priority 1 Water	P	Cohesion Fund		283 121 892,00	234 866 599,00	48 255 293,00	49 962 687,00	49 962 687,00	0,00	333 084 579,00	84.9999999550%
	Priority 5 Air		Cohesion Fund		76 669 424,00	63 601 888,00	13 067 536,00	13 529 899,00	13 529 899,00	0,00	90 199 323,00	84.9999993902%
Technical assistance	Priority 5 Technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(4) CPR	P	ERDF	Transition	15 340 000,00	12 462 529,00	2 877 471,00	6 574 286,00	6 574 286,00	0,00	21 914 286,00	69.9999990874%
				Less developed	16 700 000,00	13 509 975,00	3 190 025,00	2 947 059,00	2 947 059,00	0,00	19 647 059,00	84.9999992365%
Technical assistance	Priority 6 Technical assistance pursuant to Article 37 CPR		ERDF or ESF+ or JTF or Cohesion Fund									
			Total ERDF	More developed								
				Transition	84 631 084,00	68 756 020,00	15 875 064,00	36 270 467,00	36 270 467,00	0,00	120 901 551,00	69.9999985939%
				Less developed	1 087 167 693,00	879 497 523,00	207 670 170,00	191 853 125,00	191 853 125,00	0,00	1 279 020 818,00	84.9999998202%

			Outermost and northern sparsely populated								
		Total ESF+	More developed								
			Transition								
			Less developed								
			Outermost and northern sparsely populated								
		JTF**	Article 3 JTF Regulation resources								
			Article 4 JTF Regulation resources								
		Total Cohesion Fund		359 791 316,00	298 468 487,00	61 322 829,00	63 492 586,00	63 492 586,00	0,00	423 283 902,00	84,9999998346%
		Grand total		1 531 590 093,00	1 246 722 030,00	284 868 063,00	291 616 178,00	291 616 178,00	0,00	1 823 206 271,00	

\* For ERDF: less developed, transition, more developed, and, where applicable, special allocation for outermost and northern sparsely populated regions. For ESF+: less developed, transition, more developed and, where applicable, additional allocation for outermost regions. For Cohesion Fund: not applicable. For technical assistance, application of categories of region depends on selection of a fund.

\*\* Indicate the total JTF resources, including the complementary support transferred from the ERDF and the ESF+. The table shall not include the amounts in accordance to Article 7 JTF Regulation. In case of technical assistance financed from the JTF, the JTF resources should be split into resources related to Articles 3 and 4 JTF Regulation. For Article 4 JTF Regulation, there is no flexibility amount.

For the Investment for jobs and growth goal: programmes using technical assistance according to Article 36(5) CPR in accordance with the choice made in the Partnership Agreement.

**Table 11: Total financial allocations by fund and national contribution**[illegible]



				sparsely populated									
		JTF*	Article 3 JTF Regulation resources										
			Article 4 JTF Regulation resources										
		Total Cohesion Fund											
Grand total													

\* For ERDF and ESF+: less developed, transition, more developed, and, where applicable special allocation for outermost and northern sparsely populated regions. For Cohesion Fund: not applicable. For technical assistance, application of categories of region depends on the selection of the fund.

\*\* Indicate the total JTF resources, including the complementary support transferred from the ERDF and the ESF+. The table shall not include the amounts in accordance to Article 7 JTF Regulation. In case of technical assistance financed from the JTF, the JTF resources should be split into resources related to Articles 3 and 4 JTF Regulation. For Article 4 JTF Regulation, there is no flexibility amount.

For the EMFAF:

Reference: point (g)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR

EMFAF programmes using technical assistance according to Article 36(4) CPR in accordance with the choice made in the Partnership Agreement.

**Table 11A: Total financial allocations by fund and national contribution**

Priority	Specific objective (nomenclature set out in the EMFAF Regulation)	Basis for calculation of Union support	Union contribution	National public contribution	Total	Co-financing rate
Priority 1	1.1.1	Public				
	1.1.2	Public				
	1.2	Public				
	1.3	Public				
	1.4	Public				
	1.5	Public				
	1.6	Public				
Priority 2	2.1	Public				
	2.2	Public				
Priority 3	3.1	Public				
Priority 4	4.1	Public				
Technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(4) CPR	5.1	Public				
Technical assistance pursuant to Article 37 CPR	5.2	Public				

EMFAF programmes using technical assistance according to Article 36(5) CPR in accordance with the choice made in the Partnership Agreement.

**Table 11A: Total financial allocations by fund and national contribution**

Priority	Specific objective (nomenclature set out in the EMFAF Regulation)	Basis for calculation of Union support	Union contribution		National public contribution	Total	Co-financing rate
			Union contribution without technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR	Union contribution for technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR			
Priority 1	1.1.1	Public					
	1.1.2	Public					
	1.2	Public					
	1.3	Public					
	1.4	Public					
	1.5	Public					
	1.6	Public					
Priority 2	2.1	Public					
	2.2	Public					
Priority 3	3.1	Public					
Priority 4	4.1	Public					
Technical assistance (Article 37 CPR)	5.1	Public					



#### 4. Enabling conditions

Reference: point (i) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 12: Enabling conditions**

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
			Yes/No	Criterion 1	Y/N	[500]	[1 000]
Updated planning for required investments in water and wastewater sectors	ERDF and CF	Promoting access to water and sustainable water management	Yes	<p>For each or both sectors, a national investment plan is in place and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An assessment of the current state of implementation of Directive 91/271/EEC [and the recast of the Drinking Water Directive (DWD) 98/83/EC].</li> <li>2. The identification and planning of any public investments, including an indicative financial estimation. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Required to implement the UWWTD, including a prioritization with regard to the size of agglomerations and the environmental impact, with investments broken down for each wastewater agglomeration.</li> <li>b. Required to implement Directive 98/83/EC.</li> <li>c. Required to match the needs stemming from the Directive (EU) 2020/2184 regarding in particular the revised quality parameters detailed in annex I.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. An estimate of investments needed to renew existing wastewater and water supply infrastructure, including networks, based on their age</li> </ol>	Y	National investment WSS plan, adopted by CM Decision No 19/31.03.21. <a href="https://www.eufunds.bg/bg/node/8239">https://www.eufunds.bg/bg/node/8239</a>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NIWSSP contains prepared updated assessment for all agglomerations, as a whole, and for implementation of art. 3, 4 and 5 of Directive 91/271 / EEC. The settlements for compliance with Directive 98/83/EC are listed, incl. the requirements for amending the Directive.</li> <li>2. The investments required for each agglomeration to comply with Directive 91/271/EEC and with Art. 3, 4 and 5 are presented in the annexes to the NIWSSP by agglomerations. Prioritization was performed on the basis of 6 criteria. As a result, investments are planned for different time horizons. Total investments to comply with the Drinking Water Directive are included. Prioritization was performed, based on the population and the size of the settlement.</li> <li>3. NIWSSP contains an update of the assessment of the necessary</li> </ol>

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				and depreciation plans. 4. An indication of potential sources of public financing, when needed to complement user charges.			investments for the reconstruction of the existing WSS infrastructure and prepared analysis of potential sources and ways of public funding, which according to the unofficial assessment of the EC received on 28.02.20022 is "reliable".  4. Assumptions about the resources required to comply with Directive 91/271/EEC and the Drinking Water Directive are included in the NIWSSP. Additional funding sources are the state budget - mainly through the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, the Enterprise for Management of Environmental Protection Activities at the Ministry of Environment and Water, municipal budgets and water operators through its investment program set in an approved five-year business plan.
Updated planning for waste management	ERDF	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	Yes	Waste management plan(s) are in place in accordance with Article 28 of Directive 2008/98/EC, covering the entire territory of the Member State and include:  1. An analysis of the	Y	National Waste Management Plan 2021-2028 adopted by CM Decision No 459/17.06.2021.	1. Annex № 1 to NWMP presents a detailed Report on the current situation and the achieved progress in waste management in the country for the period from 2008 to 2018. Chapter

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				<p>current waste management situation in the geographical entity concerned, including the type, quantity and source of waste generated and an evaluation of their future development taking into account the expected impacts of measures set out in the Waste Prevention Programme(s) developed in accordance with Article 29 of Directive 2008/98/EC.</p> <p>2. An assessment of existing waste collection schemes, including the material and territorial coverage of separate collection and measures to improve its operation, as well as the need for new collection schemes.</p> <p>3. An investment gap assessment justifying the need for the closure of existing waste installations and additional or upgraded waste infrastructure, with an information of the sources of revenues available to meet operation and maintenance costs.</p> <p>4. Information on how future site locations will be determined and on the capacity of future waste treatment installations.</p>		<a href="https://www.moew.government.bg/bg/otpaduci">https://www.moew.government.bg/bg/otpaduci</a>	<p>1.1. “Analysis of the current waste state” presents an analysis of the waste management in Bulgaria in terms of their type, quantity and source of generation, i.e.: municipal waste, industrial non-hazardous waste, construction waste, hazardous waste, widespread waste, WWTP sludge, medical and biological waste. Annex № 2 (under the title “Forecasts / scenarios for future development of the waste management policy in the next programming period) to the NWMP presents the assessment of the future development of waste management, taking into account the expected impact of the measures included in the Waste Prevention Program, developed in accordance with Article 29 of Directive 2008/98/EC and amended by Directive 2018/851/EC.</p> <p>2. The assessment of the existing waste collection schemes, including the relevant material and territorial scope of separate</p>

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							<p>waste collection, the measures to improve its functioning and the need to introduce new waste collection schemes is presented in Annex 1 to the NWMP - Detailed report on the existing status and progress achieved in terms of waste management in the country for the period from 2008 to 2018, Chapter 1.8 "Analysis and evaluation of the implemented waste management schemes on the principle of "Producer responsibility" and "Polluter pays".</p> <p>3. An assessment of the lack of investments, which justifies the need of closure of the existing waste treatment facility and additional and modernized waste management infrastructure, including information on the available revenue sources, needed for operating and maintenance costs, is presented in:</p> <p>A. Annex 1 to the NWMP "Detailed Report on the existing Situation and Progress in Waste Management in the Country for the Period from 2008 to 2019, Chapter</p>

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							<p>1.9. Analysis and assessment of the technical capacity for waste treatment, sections 1 - 8.</p> <p>B. Annexes 6 – 9 to the NWMP 2021-2028.</p> <p>Information on the available sources of revenue needed to cover the costs of operation and maintenance is presented in Annex 1 to the NWMP - Detailed Report on the existing Situation and Progress in Waste Management in the Country for the Period from 2008 to 2019, Chapter 1.12. "Analysis of financial flows in waste management in Bulgaria".</p> <p>4. Information on how the locations of the future sites will be determined, as well as information on the capacity of the future waste treatment facilities is included in Annex 1 to the NWMP - "Detailed Report on the existing Situation and Progress in Waste Management in the Country for the Period from 2008 to 2019", Chapter 1.9. Analysis and assessment of the technical capacity for waste treatment, Section IX: "Determination of</p>

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							the future locations of the sites, as well as the capacity of the future waste treatment facilities".
Effective disaster risk management framework	ERDF	Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches	Yes	<p>A national or regional disaster risk management plan, established on the basis of a risk assessment, taking due account of the likely impacts of climate change and of the existing climate change adaptation strategies, is in place and includes:</p> <p>1. A description of key risks, assessed in accordance with the provisions of Article 6 (1) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, reflecting current and evolving risk profile with an indicative 25-35 years time span. The assessment of climate related risks is based on climate change projections and scenarios.</p> <p>2. Description of the disaster prevention, preparedness and response measures to address the key risks identified. The measures shall be prioritized in proportion to the risks and their economic impact, capacity gaps, effectiveness and efficiency, taking into account possible alternatives.</p> <p>3. Information on financing resources and mechanisms available for covering the</p>	Y	<p>Reports prepared under the Agreement on the provision of consulting services, strengthening resilience to disaster risks, between the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria and the IBRD a draft National Disaster Risk Management Plan (NSRF) was prepared, which includes:</p> <p>1.1. Description of the main risks assessed in accordance with Article 6, para. 1 of Decision № 1313/2013/EU of the EP and of the Council, reflecting the current and evolving risk profile for an indicative period of 25-35 years. The assessment of climate risks is based on forecasts and scenarios for climate change.</p> <p>1.2. Description of disaster prevention, preparedness and response measures to address the main identified risks. Measures are ranked in order of importance according to risks and their economic impact,</p> <p><a href="https://www.eufunds.bg/bg/node/8238">https://www.eufunds.bg/bg/node/8238</a></p> <p><a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ms0TnL1NsGV4Pae_g8_A9F7lNKRYz8AAy?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ms0TnL1NsGV4Pae_g8_A9F7lNKRYz8AAy?usp=sharing</a></p>	<p>1. As a result of the ratified Agreement for the provision of consulting services, strengthening the resilience to disaster risks, between the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria and the IBRD a draft National Disaster Risk Management Plan (NSRF) was prepared, which includes:</p> <p>1.1. Description of the main risks assessed in accordance with Article 6, para. 1 of Decision № 1313/2013/EU of the EP and of the Council, reflecting the current and evolving risk profile for an indicative period of 25-35 years. The assessment of climate risks is based on forecasts and scenarios for climate change.</p> <p>1.2. Description of disaster prevention, preparedness and response measures to address the main identified risks. Measures are ranked in order of importance according to risks and their economic impact,</p>

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				operation and maintenance costs related to prevention preparedness and response.			<p>gaps in capacity, efficiency and effectiveness, taking into account possible alternatives.</p> <p>2. On criteria 2 – see criteria 1.</p> <p>3. The submitted reports on each component have been approved by the Ministry of Interior, and a draft CMD for the adoption of a National Disaster Risk Profile and the NDRMP is to be prepared as part of the National Disaster Protection Plan.</p> <p>The draft NDRMP contains an analysis of the national funding sources.</p> <p>Information is also included is on EU funds and various international investment opportunities in disaster risk management (DRM). Various risk transfer mechanisms are included in the plan and are encouraged.</p> <p>The national funding sources cover the following four mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financing of activities for DRM, provided under the Disaster Protection Act;</li> <li>- financing of DRM activities from the annual budgets of ministries,</li> </ul>

Enabling conditions	Fund	Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							<p>departments and municipalities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financing from the state budget by decision of the Council of Ministers, provided by the reserve for unforeseen and/or extraordinary expenses;</li> <li>- Voluntary scheme</li> <li>- Municipal Solidarity Fund.</li> </ul>
Prioritised action framework for the necessary conservation measures involving Union co-financing	ERDF	Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution	Yes	<p>For interventions supporting nature conservation measures in Natura 2000 sites within the scope of Directive 92/43/EEC:</p> <p>A priority action framework pursuant to Article 8 of Directive 92/43/EEC is in place and includes all elements required by the template for the priority action framework for 2021-2027 including the priority measures and an estimate of financing needs.</p>	Y	<p>The National Prioritised Action Framework (NPAF) for Natura 2000 for the period 2021-2027 is available in the Information System for Natura 2000 Network at:</p> <p><a href="http://natura2000.moew.government.bg/Home/Documents">http://natura2000.moew.government.bg/Home/Documents</a> as well as at: <a href="https://www.eufunds.bg/bg/node/8241">https://www.eufunds.bg/bg/node/8241</a></p>	<p>The NPAF 2021-2027 is a tool for strategic multi-annual planning in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the necessary measures for the management of Natura 2000 network in Bulgaria and the related environmental infrastructure. 74 administrative and conservation measures for protection and/or restoration of favourable conservation status of natural habitats and species of interest to Bulgaria and the EU are included, while taking into account economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics. Funding for the measures is provided by the ERDF/CF, the EAFRD, the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund, the European</p>



<b>Enabling conditions</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Specific objective (N/A to the EMFAF)</b>	<b>Fulfilment of enabling condition</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Fulfilment of criteria</b>	<b>Reference to relevant documents</b>	<b>Justification</b>
							Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the RRF and the national budget. All stakeholders were involved in the process of developing the document and a public discussion was held. Acknowledged by ARES (2022)609803-26.01.2022 National Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000.

## 5. Programme authorities

Reference: point (k) of Article 22(3) and Articles 71 and 84 CPR

Table 13: Programme authorities

Programme authorities	Name of the institution [500]	Contact name [200]	E-mail [200]
Managing Authority	General Directorate “Operational Programme Environment” in the Ministry of Environment and Water	Galina Simeonova	galina.simeonova@moew.government.bg
Audit Authority	Executive Agency “Audit of EU Funds” in the Ministry of Finance	Anna Martinova-Petkova	aeuf@minfin.bg
Body which receives payments from the Commission	“National Fund” Directorate in the Ministry of Finance	Detelina Karaeneva	natfund@minfin.bg
Where applicable, body or, bodies which receive payments from the Commission in case of technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR	NA	NA	NA
Accounting function in case this function is entrusted to a body other than the managing authority	“National Fund” Directorate in the Ministry of Finance	Detelina Karaeneva	natfund@minfin.bg

The repartition of the reimbursed amounts for technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR if more bodies are identified to receive payments from the Commission.

Reference: Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 13A: The portion of the percentages set out in point (b) of Article 36(5) CPR that would be reimbursed to the bodies which receive payments from the Commission in case of technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR (in percentage points)**

Body 1	p.p.
Body 2*	p.p.

\* Number of bodies defined by a Member State.

## 6. Partnership

Reference: point (h) of Article 22(3) CPR

<p><i>Text field [10 000]</i></p> <p>Pursuant to the provisions of Art. 8 of the Common Provisions Regulation for the period 2021-2027 and taking into account the specifics of Programme “Environment”, the partnership with a wide range of organizations is a guiding principle in its development, implementation and management. This is guaranteed by the Thematic working group (TWG), dedicated to the development of PE 2021-2027, in accordance with Article 7 of the Decree of the Council of Ministers № 142/7.06.2019 for development of the strategic and programme documents of the Republic of Bulgaria management of EU funds for</p>
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the programming period 2021-2027. The experience from both programming periods - 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, shows the key importance of the cooperation on EC level for the efficient management and implementation of the programme.

In August 2019 an internal working group (IWG) was established with the task to prepare the necessary analyses to serve as a basis for the work of the PE 2021-2027 TWG. In the IWG the specialized administrations of MoEW are represented that are responsible for the policy making in the field of environment and climate change, subject of funding in the framework of PE 2021-2027. A working version of the programme is developed for the IWG. Based on it, the first PE draft is developed. The draft includes a strategy for programme contribution to the policy objectives / thematic objectives for 2021-2027 programming period. The strategy is developed on the basis of analysis of the member state engagements regarding the European and national legislation on environment and climate change; analysis of the current situation; lessons learnt from past experience; challenges about the administrative capacity and governance and is based on relevant national documents (plans, programmes and strategies) as well as on EU documents. Justification for the selected policy objectives/thematic objectives is developed, and also priorities of the programme, incl. specific objectives of each priority.

As a result of the work of this group, all documents necessary for the preparation of the first draft of the programme are elaborated.

As a next step, OPE MA initiates the establishment of a TWG for development of PE 2021-2027, in pursuance of Article 7, paragraph 1 of Council of Ministers Decree 142/2019 and with members in accordance with the provisions of Article 7, paragraph 4 of the the same Decree, as the document defines the composition and main obligations of the participants in the working groups, as well as the procedure for selection of non-profit legal entities for public benefit activities, whose representatives to participate in the TWG.

To ensure representation of non-profit legal organisations, working in public interest in the fields in accordance with Article 7, paragraph 4, point 14 of Decree 142/2019, on 24.9.2019 the MA of PE started a procedure for selection of non-profit legal entities for public benefit, whose representatives to participate in the composition of the TWG for the development of PE 2021 - 2027. The invitation was published on the website of the Unified Information Portal and it specified the deadlines for the application, the documents to be completed and the criteria to be met by the applicant organizations, such as:

- Organizations working in the field of gender equality, non-discrimination and equal opportunities;
- Organizations working in the field of social inclusion and integration of marginalized groups;
- Environmental organizations;
- Organizations working in the field of education, science and culture;
- Organizations of local action groups and local fisheries action groups implementing the CLLD approach.

Applications have been submitted by the relevant representatives of the NGO sector. Due to the lack of applications by organizations working in the field of social inclusion and integration of marginalized groups, the invitation was re-published (on 21.10.2019), aiming to guarantee their representation. The involvement of the widest possible range of departments, organizations and different stakeholders in the process of preparation of the Programme is a good practice that the MA of the PE continues to follow. The composition of the TWG for the preparation of PE 2021-2027 is determined by Order RD-949/17.12.2019, and is agreed at the national level with the Central Coordination Unit Directorate. The order was amended and complemented with representatives from different stakeholders, agencies and organizations are involved as follows:

Directorates within the Ministry of Environment and Water:

- General Directorate Operational Programme Environment;
- National Nature Protection Service;
- Coordination of EU affairs and international cooperation;
- Waste management and soil protection;
- Water management;
- Protection of air quality;
- Environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment and pollution prevention;
- Climate change policy;
- Executive Environment Agency.

Directorates within the Council of Ministers:

- Central Coordination Unit;
- Good governance;
- Economic and social policy.

Ministry of Finance:

- Directorate “Economic and financial policy”;
- Directorate “State aid and real sector”;
- Directorate “National Fund”;
- Executive Agency “Audit of EU Funds”;
- Executive Agency “Certification Audit of European Agricultural Funds”;
- Ministry of the Interior,
- Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works,
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- Ministry of Labor and Social Policy,
- Agency for People with Disabilities,
- Ministry of Youth and Sports,
- Ministry of Energy,
- Ministry of Health,
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food,
- Ministry of Economy,
- Ministry of Education and Science,
- Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications,
- Ministry of Tourism,
- Ministry of Culture,
- Road Infrastructure Agency,
- Agency for Social Assistance,
- Fund Manager of Financial Instruments in Bulgaria,
- State Fund Agriculture,
- National Statistical Institute,
- Commission for Protection against Discrimination,
- The six Regional Development Councils at NUTS 2 level,
- Association of Industrial Capital in Bulgaria,
- Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry,
- Confederation of Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria,
- Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce,
- Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria,
- Nationally representative organizations of and for people with disabilities,
- National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria,
- Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,
- Council of Rectors,
- Agricultural Academy,

- Non-profit legal entities for public benefit<sup>22</sup>, working in the field of:
- environment,
- education, science and culture,
- gender equality, non-discrimination and equal opportunities,
- social inclusion and integration of marginalized groups.

The order defines the functions of the TWG, which are:

- to prepare the draft programme “Environment” for the programming period 2021-2027;
- to perform the functions provided for in Art. 10, para. 1, items 1-7 of the Council of Ministers Decree № 142/2019;
- to discuss and reflect the proposals received during the public discussions and consultations of the programme, as well as the comments received from the European Commission on the submitted draft programme “Environment” 2021-2027.

The organization and activities of the TWG are regulated in Internal Rules for the operation of the TWG, and current information on the progress of the programme is published in the section “Operational Programme Environment” of the Single Information Portal of the European Structural and Investment Funds - [www.eufunds.bg](http://www.eufunds.bg).

According to the internal rules that are being published on the programme website, communication with the group members is carried out by the TWG secretariat, which sends timely documents and information materials before and after the meetings, processes, summarizes and disseminates the received feedback and comments (after they are reflected by the MA in the draft documents and within Negotiation boxes) in order to ensure compliance with the principles of partnership and good communication with all stakeholders involved.

In the performance of its functions, the working group interacts with the thematic working groups for the development of other programmes and the working group for the development of the Partnership Agreement for the programming period 2021-2027, regularly exchanging information on the progress in developing the Partnership Agreement and programmes.

Simultaneously with the development of the programme, according to Art. 20, para. 2 of the Ordinance on the terms and conditions for carrying out environmental assessment of plans and programmes, for the programme “Environment” 2021-2027 an Environmental assessment report is being developed. For the report consultations were held with the public, the interested bodies and third parties, for which public access was provided to the documentation on the OPE website for the statutory deadlines.

Observing the principle of partnership and continuity, the composition of the TWG subsequently “merges” into the composition of the Monitoring Committee of PE 2021-2027, again with the representation of a wide range of stakeholders who are involved in monitoring the entire investment cycle of the programme, from the planning and implementation process to the stage of monitoring, evaluation and achievement of its objectives. It is envisaged that the representatives of the MC of PE will participate in trainings and presentation of good practices, as well as on-site visits to projects financed under PE 2021-2027.

The partnership principles set out in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) № 240/2014 of 7 January 2014 on a European Code of Conduct for Partnerships under the European Structural and Investment Funds will continue to be applied by the MA of the programme in the future.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.eufunds.bg/bg/opus/node/3786>

## 7. Communication and visibility

Reference: point (j) of Article 22(3) CPR

*Text field [4 500]*

Efforts will be focused on informing the general public and potential beneficiaries of PE opportunities and for the Cohesion Policy. MA considers that citizens are not only end users of the projects' results, but also partners in environmental protection common goal. The involvement and active civil sector participation in raising the awareness and engagement of the population on environmental issues is among the incentives contributing to improve population health and quality of life. Opportunities will be sought for a civil control and to engage students in monitoring the effectiveness of investments through the use of public open data.

Pursuant to Art. 48 (2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, communication officers are identified. They ensure information and good practices exchange within the INFORM EU network, as well as with the EC representation, Europe Direct Network and other multipliers.

In 2014-2020, based on conducted surveys, the programme stood out as the most recognizable among the others. The MA will focus its efforts on maintaining a high level of public awareness on the benefits for the individual citizen.

### **Objectives:**

1. Ensuring publicity of the priorities and activities, transparency in the programme implementation and results, increasing public awareness and presenting the positive impact of EU funds on the environment and hence, on the improved living quality and standards.
2. Informing (potential) beneficiaries and partners about the funding opportunities and their responsibilities to ensure active engagement in the process of implementation;
3. Raising environmental awareness and developing engagement of the younger generation as a guarantee for sustainability of environmental measures.

### **Target audiences**

- General public - active adult population;
- Children and adolescents – students (in school and university);
- Potential beneficiaries – beneficiaries and their partners;
- Administration - units and bodies involved in the management of EU funds in the environmental sector with functions in managing and administration of the programme;
- Disseminators of information, civil society bodies, environmental NGOs, media, information networks.

### **Communication activities**

- Training and information campaigns;
- Information events, incl. with a focus on operations of strategic importance;
- Management of the PE website /[www.eufunds.bg/en/opos](http://www.eufunds.bg/en/opos) and social media presence;
- Meetings and information days with (potential) beneficiaries, regular online surveys, sociological surveys, round tables, focus groups, open discussions, etc.

### **Channels of communication**

- Electronic and print media (press conferences, publications, interviews, reports, commercial spots, audio and /or video broadcasts, press releases, seminars, etc.);
- Online communication e.g. Youtube - for visualization of attractive projects; Facebook, Instagram - opportunities to convey the messages of the programme to the general public; TikTok - campaigns aimed at teenagers;), UMIS;
- PE website and Information portal of the ESIF – [www.eufunds.bg](http://www.eufunds.bg);
- Direct communication (events, information days, discussions, trainings, etc.);

- Monitoring Committee;
- DICs, EC representation and EP liaison office, Europe Direct Network,
- Economic and social partners;
- Others.

### **Budget**

The total budget of EUR 2 905 662 includes the amount for information and communication under the TA priority (ERDF - EUR 2 240 000 and EUR 665 662 national co-financing under IF 179).

### **Monitoring and assessment indicators with baseline value 0 and target values till 2029:**

- number of meetings/information days with potential beneficiaries for presentation of open calls and eligible activities – target value 20;
- number of training seminars/information meetings for beneficiaries for project implementation–target value 30;
- number of campaigns and information events held (incl. online) - target value 6;
- number of publications on PE website - target value 120;
- number of visits on website and social networks (web analytics, social media indicators) - target value 720 000;
- number of broadcasts/publications in the electronic/print media - target value 7 200;
- number of people covered by information campaigns and communication measures - target value 250 000;
- level of public awareness – baseline value of 2021 is 60%, the target value 65%.

## 8. Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Reference: Articles 94 and 95 CPR

Table 14: Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Intended use of Articles 94 and 95	YES	NO
From the adoption programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates under the priority according to Article 94 CPR (if yes, fill in Appendix 1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
From the adoption programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs according to Article 95 CPR (if yes, fill in Appendix 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



## Appendix 1

### Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates

#### Template for submitting data for the consideration of the Commission

(Article 94) CPR

Date of submitting the proposal	

This Appendix is not required when Union-level simplified cost options (SCO) established by the delegated act referred to in Article 94(4) CPR are used.

A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Fund	Specific objective	Category of region	Estimated proportion of the total financial allocation within the priority to which the SCO will be applied in %	Type(s) of operation covered		Indicator triggering reimbursement		Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement	Type of SCO (standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates)	Amount (in EUR) or percentage (in case of flat rates) of the SCO
					Code <sup>23</sup>	Description	Code <sup>24</sup>	Description			

<sup>23</sup> This refers to the code for the intervention field dimension in Table 1 of Annex I to the CPR and Annex IV to the EMFAF Regulation.

<sup>24</sup> This refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable.

**B. Details by type of operation (to be completed for every type of operation)**

Did the managing authority receive support from an external company to set out the simplified costs below?

If so, please specify which external company:

Yes/No – Name of external company

1. Description of the operation type including the timeline for implementation <sup>25</sup>	
2. Specific objective(s)	
3. Indicator triggering reimbursement <sup>26</sup>	
4. Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement	
5. Standard scale of unit cost, lump sum or flat rate	
6. Amount per unit of measurement or percentage (for flat rates) of the SCO	
7. Categories of costs covered by the unit cost, lump sum or flat rate	
8. Do these categories of costs cover all eligible expenditure for the operation? (Y/N)	
9. Adjustment(s) method <sup>27</sup>	
10. Verification of the achievement of the units - describe what document(s)/system will be used	

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<sup>25</sup> Envisaged starting date of the selection of operations and envisaged final date of their completion (ref. Article 63(5) CPR).

<sup>26</sup> For operations encompassing several simplified cost options covering different categories of costs, different projects or successive phases of an operation, the fields 3 to 11 need to be filled in for each indicator triggering reimbursement.

<sup>27</sup> If applicable, indicate the frequency and timing of the adjustment and a clear reference to a specific indicator (including a link to the website where this indicator is published, if applicable).

to verify the achievement of the units delivered - describe what will be checked and by whom during management verifications - describe what arrangements will be made to collect and store relevant data/documents	
11. Possible perverse incentives, mitigating measures <sup>28</sup> and the estimated level of risk (high/medium/low)	
12. Total amount (national and Union) expected to be reimbursed by the Commission on this basis	

### **C: Calculation of the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates**

1. Source of data used to calculate the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates (who produced, collected and recorded the data; where the data are stored; cut-off dates; validation, etc.).

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2. Please specify why the proposed method and calculation based on Article 94(2) is relevant to the type of operation.

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3. Please specify how the calculations were made, in particular including any assumptions made in terms of quality or quantities. Where relevant, statistical evidence and benchmarks should be used and, if requested, provided in a format that is usable by the Commission.

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4. Please explain how you have ensured that only eligible expenditure was included in the calculation of the standard scale of unit cost, lump sum or flat rate.

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5. Assessment of the audit authority(ies) of the calculation methodology and amounts and the arrangements to ensure the verification, quality, collection and storage of data.

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<sup>28</sup> Are there any potential negative implications on the quality of the supported operations and, if so, what measures (e.g. quality assurance) will be taken to offset this risk?

**Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs**

**Template for submitting data for the consideration of the Commission**

(Article 95 CPR)

Date of submitting the proposal	

This Appendix is not required when amounts for Union-level financing not linked to costs established by the delegated act referred to in Article 95(4) CPR are used.

## A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Fund	Specific objective	Category of region	The amount covered by the financing not linked to costs	Type(s) of operation covered		Conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	indicator		Unit of measurement for the conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Envisaged type of reimbursement method used to reimburse the beneficiary or beneficiaries
					Code <sup>29</sup>	Description		Code <sup>30</sup>	Description		

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<sup>29</sup> This refers to the code for the intervention field dimension in Table 1 of Annex I to the CPR and Annex IV to the EMFAF Regulation.

<sup>30</sup> This refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable.

**B. Details by type of operation (to be completed for every type of operation)**

1. Description of the operation type			
2. Specific objective(s)			
3. Conditions to be fulfilled or results to be achieved			
4. Deadline for fulfilment of conditions or results to be achieved			
5. Indicator definition			
6. Unit of measurement for conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission			
7. Intermediate deliverables (if applicable) triggering reimbursement by the Commission with schedule for reimbursements	Intermediate deliverables	Envisaged date	Amounts (in EUR)
8. Total amount (including Union and national funding)			
9. Adjustment(s) method			
10. Verification of the achievement of the result or condition (and where relevant, the intermediate deliverables): - describe what document(s)/system will be used to verify the achievement of the result or condition (and where relevant, each of the intermediate deliverables) - describe how management verifications (including on-the-spot) will be carried out, and by whom. - describe what arrangements will be made to collect and store relevant data/documents			
11. Use of grants in the form of financing not linked to costs Does the grant provided by Member State to beneficiaries take the form of financing not linked to costs? [Y/N]			
12. Arrangements to ensure the audit trail Please list the body(ies) responsible for these arrangements.			

**List of planned operations of strategic importance with a timetable**

(Article 22(3) CPR)

*Text field [2 000]*

As operations of strategic importance are defined the projects for:

- construction of WSS infrastructure in agglomerations above 10 000 P.E. They shall be listed based on specific terms of application. There are 8 projects for WSS territories of Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Pleven, Sofia-city, Sofia-district, Targovishte, Dobrich and Haskovo. These operations provide a key contribution to the achievement of the PE's objectives in the WSS sector with regard to achieving compliance with Directive 91/271/EEC, given it is directly related to citizens' quality of life and environmental protection;

- phasing out the use of solid fuel heating devices. They shall be listed based on specific terms of application, taking into account the average annual and average daily emission exceedances, the compliance with the Municipal Air Quality Management Plans, etc. These are projects of municipalities falling under Judgment of the Court of Justice of the EU Case C-488/15 of 5 April 2017. These operations provide a key contribution to the achievement of the PE's objectives and are the most representative of the programme embodying its goal on achieving air quality standards, given they are directly related to citizens' health and quality of life.

- pilot investments in heating systems based on hydrogen technologies as alternative domestic heating option.

Visibility measures are envisaged: organization of dedicated inauguration media events reflecting the project implementation; press conferences, project/site visits; publication of regular information on the project implementation on the Single Information Portal in PE 2021-2027 section, etc.

Name of the operation	Procedure announcement	Project proposal submission	Evaluation and signing of the Grant Contract	Starting the project implementation	Finalizing the project implementation
WSS Sofia	1Q/2Q 2025	2Q/3Q 2025	4Q 2025/ 1Q 2026	2026	2029
7 RWOs	2Q 2024	4Q 2024	1Q 2025	2026	2029
Replacement of heating devices	1Q/2Q 2023	3Q/4Q 2023	4Q 2023	4Q 2023/1Q 2024	2029



### EMFAF action plan for each outermost region

NB: to be duplicated for each outermost region

Template for submitting data for the consideration of the Commission

Name of the outermost region	
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#### A. Description of the strategy for the sustainable exploitation of fisheries and the development of the sustainable blue economy

<i>Text field [30 000]</i>
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#### B. Description of the main actions envisaged and the corresponding financial means

Description of the main actions	EMFAF amount allocated (EUR)
Structural support to the fishery and aquaculture sector under the EMFAF <i>Text field [10 000]</i>	
Compensation for the additional costs under Article 24 of the EMFAF Regulation <i>Text field [10 000]</i>	
Other investments in the sustainable blue economy necessary to achieve a sustainable coastal development <i>Text field [10 000]</i>	
TOTAL	

#### C. Description of the synergies with other sources of Union funding

<i>Text field [10 000]</i>
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#### D. Additional funding for the implementation of the compensation for the additional costs (State aid)

Information to be provided for each envisaged scheme/ad hoc aid

Region	Name of the region(s) (NUTS) <sup>31</sup>	...
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<sup>31</sup> NUTS — Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics. Typically, the region is specified at level 2. Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the establishment of a

		...
		...
Granting authority	Name	...
	Postal address	...
	Web address	...
Title of the aid measure	...	
National legal basis (reference to the relevant national official publication)	...	
Web link to the full text of the aid measure	...	
Type of measure	<input type="checkbox"/> Scheme	Name of the beneficiary and the group <sup>32</sup> it belongs to ...
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ad hoc aid	
Amendment of an existing aid scheme or ad hoc aid		Commission aid reference
	<input type="checkbox"/> Prolongation	...
	<input type="checkbox"/> Modification	...
Duration <sup>33</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Scheme	dd/mm/yyyy to dd/mm/yyyy
Date of granting <sup>34</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ad hoc aid	dd/mm/yyyy
Economic sector(s) concerned	<input type="checkbox"/> All economic sectors eligible to receive aid	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited to certain sectors: please specify at NACE group level <sup>35</sup>	...

common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) (OJ L 154, 21.6.2003, p. 1) as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2016/2066 amending the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) (OJ L 322, 29.11.2016, p. 1).

<sup>32</sup> An undertaking for the purposes of rules on competition laid down in the Treaty and for the purposes of this section is any entity engaged in an economic activity, regardless of its legal status and the way in which it is financed (see decision of the Court of Justice in Case C-222/04, Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze v Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze SpA et al. [2006] ECR I-289). The Court of Justice has ruled that entities which are controlled (on a legal or on a *de facto* basis) by the same entity should be considered as one undertaking (Case C-382/99 Netherlands v Commission [2002] ECR I-5163).

<sup>33</sup> Period during which the granting authority can commit itself to grant the aid.

<sup>34</sup> 'Date of granting the aid' means the date when the legal right to receive the aid is conferred on the beneficiary under the applicable national legal regime.

<sup>35</sup> NACE Rev. 2 — Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Union. Typically, the sector shall be specified at group level.

		...
Type of beneficiary	<input type="checkbox"/> SME	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Large undertakings	
Budget	Total annual amount of the budget planned under the scheme <sup>36</sup>	National currency ... (full amounts) ...
	Overall amount of the ad hoc aid awarded to the undertaking <sup>37</sup>	National currency ... (full amounts) ...
	<input type="checkbox"/> For guarantees <sup>38</sup>	National currency ... (full amounts)
Aid instrument	<input type="checkbox"/> Grant/Interest rate subsidy	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Loan/Repayable advances	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Guarantee (where appropriate with a reference to the Commission decision <sup>39</sup> )	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Tax advantage or tax exemption	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Provision of risk finance	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) ...	
Motivation	Indicate why a State aid scheme has been established or an ad-hoc aid has been granted, instead of assistance under the EMFAF: <input type="checkbox"/> measure not covered by the national programme; <input type="checkbox"/> prioritisation in the allocation of funds under the national programme; <input type="checkbox"/> funding no longer available under the EMFAF; <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify)	

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<sup>36</sup> In case of an aid scheme: indicate the annual overall amount of the budget planned under the scheme or the estimated tax loss per year for all aid instruments contained in the scheme.

<sup>37</sup> In case of an *ad hoc* aid award: indicate the overall aid amount/tax loss.

<sup>38</sup> For guarantees, indicate the (maximum) amount of loans guaranteed.

<sup>39</sup> Where appropriate, reference to the Commission decision approving the methodology to calculate the gross grant equivalent.