

Horizon Europe

Global Challenges & European Industrial Competitiveness

Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

FAQs - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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General information

We would like to confirm that the applicants must follow the instructions and use the template available in the on-line submission system.

If applicable, the applicants can read the additional guidance about the use of generative AI in the F&T Portal.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-01-1: Invasive alien species

Question

One proposal aims at nature-based and sustainable restoration and enhancement of the ecological integrity of riparian ecosystems and floodplains, while supporting the development of sustainable agricultural, forestry and water sector practices to mitigate biodiversity loss and conserve ecosystem services. They would like to clearly identify the correct classification of their project between the categories "Area A: terrestrial ecosystem" and "Area B: aquatic ecosystem", as distinguished in the call for proposals. Since the project focuses mainly on wetlands, including the combined management of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, they thought that the category "Area B: aquatic ecosystem" would be relevant. Can you please confirm that this interpretation is in line with the application criteria?

Answer

Given the description, the classification of the proposal under the category "aquatic ecosystem" seems relevant. However, we recommend the applicant to carefully assess whether the proposal addresses the topic on "invasive alien species".

HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-01-2: Digital for nature.

Question

Is the participation of the JRC possible in both Areas, A and B? If the participation of the JRC is also possible in Area B could you please indicate the possible role of the JRC in Area B?

Answer

Since the possible JRC participation is mentioned under the call condition of the whole topic, it will be accepted for both areas. If the applicants intend to use the opportunity to work with the JRC, they must include the participation of the JRC in their proposal. Under area A, they will have to base the JRC participation on the information provided in the topic text. Regarding area B, this participation was not anticipated by the Commission but might be possible with the JRC having a similar role as the one described regarding part A.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-01-8: Conservation and protection of carbon-rich and biodiversity-rich forest ecosystems.](#)

Question 1

Is it mandatory to involve European forests in the project or is it sufficient to focus exclusively on tropical forests? The expected outcomes only mention European forests whereas further in the text it is mentioned that cases should be included on European OR tropical forests. As these types of forest are demanding a different approach (and thus different consortium should be considered), we'd like you to clarify.

Answer 1

International cooperation is strongly encouraged by this topic, as explicitly stated in its scope. The scope also states that proposals will "set up case studies in European forests or tropical forests" and further specifies the targeted forest types in more detail: "forests of high ecological value, such as primary and old-growth forests, Mediterranean forests, peat swamp forests or mangroves". Nevertheless, proposals are also expected to contribute to "EU biodiversity and climate objectives", an "empirical analysis of the current forest management and conservation practices in European forests of high ecological value" as well as the "strict protection of primary and old-growth forest in Europe by 2030".

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-01-09: Selective breeding for organic aquaculture.](#)

Question 1

Could you explain what exactly is meant by "develop a breeding programme"? At one point in the topic text (scope) it says that "proposals should plan breeding programmes", whereas a bit later on it sounds more like the breeding programme should not only be planned, but also conducted, e.g. proposals should "breed juveniles under organic production conditions".

Answer 1

The selected project should deliver a methodology on how to do breeding compatible with organic fish farming.

Question 2

If proposals are expected:

- to come up with a plan for selective breeding programmes for the species indicated that can later on be put into practice by broodfish producers (and which both the low expected TRL and relatively small budget would suggest) OR
- to actually carry out selection and demonstrate selection response in the traits in question. This option seems to be highly challenging in light of the requirement to include at least four different species and the duration of a project of only 4 years, when a generation period for all the fish in question is at least 3 years.

Answer 2

The selected project does not necessarily have to do the breeding and see if the progeny develop the desired traits but should demonstrate that such methodology is feasible and has high probability to deliver the desired outcome.

Question 3

Could you also please specify what exactly is meant by the term "adaptive potential"?

Answer 3

The adaptive potential, in this frame, means the ability of the farmed fish population to respond to selective breeding by changes in their genotype and/or phenotype.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-02-01-two-stage - Demonstrating Nature-based Solutions for the sustainable management of water resources in a changing climate, with special attention to reducing the impacts of extreme droughts](#)

Question

The call eligibility conditions include : «At least one of the proposed demonstrations must take place in a region eligible to cohesion funds». Could you please specify further which regions are eligible?

Answer

The proposals must include at least one demonstration in a region eligible for the funds supporting the implementation of the Cohesion Policy. These are the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the Just Transition Fund (JTF). However, for non-Member state regions, the rules of participation and funding will follow those of the HORIZON EUROPE Programme (See the General Annexes A, B, C and F).

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-02-3-two-stage: Promoting minor crops in farming systems.](#)

Question 1

Are truffles considered minor crops in the framework of topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-02-3-two-stage and specially, in Spain and Italy (and probably other countries)?

Answer 1

As indicated in the topic text, specifically on footnote 124: the applicants need to explain and justify the choice of crops in relation to the proposal's and topic's ambition.

Question 2

- **Should the recovered materials from recycling after characterized be included in an industrial value chain within the lifetime of the Project? Or the development of roadmaps for inclusion in the industries and business models will be robust enough to demonstrate the future uptake and development of new value chains?**
- **To increase the circularity of the electronic value chains through the means of innovative solutions, should the deployment focus on the extraction and treatment (recycling/upcycling) or rather in adapting or developing technologies that could facilitate recycled material inclusion in new products?**

Answer 2

- The expected TRL at the end of this call is 6 to 8. TRL 6 requires the demonstration of the technology in a relevant environment and TRL 8 that the system is complete and qualified. Based on this, the development of roadmaps or similar cannot replace the actual demonstration.
- Both elements are addressed as outcomes and are equally viable. Most importantly, the call asks for an integrated value chain approach that connects upstream and downstream interventions. Note that for this topic, proposal results are expected to contribute to all of the mentioned outcomes.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-BIODIV-02-2-two-stage Demonstrating the potential of Nature-based Solutions and the New European Bauhaus to contribute to sustainable, inclusive and resilient living spaces and communities.](#)

Question 1

Does the phrasing “most complementary geographical coverage” refer to the internal choice of demonstration activities (i.e. within one submitted project) or the external complementarity of the different submitted proposals?

Answer 1

The phrasing ‘most complementary geographical coverage’ in the specific condition on the evaluation procedure of this topic refers to the complementarity of the location of the demonstration activities as foreseen by the different proposals in the ranked list of applications (i.e. external complementarity), rather than to their complementarity within a single proposal.

Question 2

Applicants would like to implement a number of pilots in different countries however the EUR 5 Million budget would only cover a limited amount of pilots, the consortium believes that an additional pilot would bring added value to the consortium and the project. However by bringing on board an additional pilot the EUR 5 Million budget expected for this proposal will be exceeded. Would the commission suggest that this additional pilot site is left out for the sake of sticking to the EUR5 Million suggested budget or are they allowed to exceed the budget? And if they are allowed to exceed the budget (given

that they proof their added value) would this make their proposal less favourable over other proposals that have abided by the EUR 5 Million limit?

Answer 2

We would like to draw your attention to the specific call conditions for this topic. Concerning the expected EU contribution per project, they indicate that: "The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 5.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts". Moreover, we would like to draw your attention to what is indicated in the scope of the topic (p. 122): "Because of the substantial investments that might be necessary for implementing the NBS, additional or follow-up funding (private or public) should be sought, including from relevant regional/national schemes under the Recovery and Resilience Fund, the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), or other relevant funds".

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-6: Citizens' science as an opportunity to foster the transition to sustainable food systems](#)

Question

Under Scope, in the section "Proposals are expected to address all the following:" the call says "Connect personal data on food to other areas, such as mobility and health and identify synergies;"

The question is: When it comes to mobility, is it understood as in "physical activity" or how "citizens interact with their surroundings"?

Answer

Mobility is one example to be deployed, as no further description is given, all aspects of mobility can be included.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-2: New healthy and sustainable food products and processes](#)

Question 1

Could "fermentation" could be considered as a "minimally processed?"

Answer 1

There is no EU definition of 'minimally processed' foods. It cannot be assumed that fermentation is being generally considered as "minimally processing", but rather that minimally processed foods should be foods that were not substantially altered. Nevertheless in the context of this particular research topic fermented products can be part of the scope. For related concepts and definitions please consult Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. It is recommended to consult legal experts if they were part of the consortium.

Question 2

Could mycoprotein (protein filamentous fungi) be considered as "plant-based foods" in this topic?

Answer 2

We understand that mycoproteins are proteins that comes from fungi and plant-based protein (plant protein) as “protein obtained from plant”. Nevertheless in the context of this particular research topic mycoproteins can be part of the scope. You can find more standardised information in some parts of the Codex Alimentarius, e.g., CODEX GENERAL STANDARD FOR VEGETABLE PROTEIN PRODUCTS (VPP) CODEX STAN 174-1989: “This standard applies to vegetable protein products (VPP) intended for use in foods, which are prepared by various separation and extraction processes from proteins from vegetable sources other than single cell protein. The VPP are intended for use in foods requiring further preparation and for use by the food processing industry. This standard does not apply to any vegetable protein product which is the subject of a specific Codex Commodity Standard and is designated by a specific name laid down in such standards.” Please consult legal experts if they were part of the consortium.

Question 3

Could seaweeds/macroalgae be considered as “plant-based foods”?

Answer 3

Seaweed is plant-based food and it can be an interesting supplement in the diets. It can be rich in proteins and fibres and low in fats, but these are of good quality. It seems appropriate to consider that it helps shifting towards more healthy and sustainable diets. However, it should indeed be consumed with care, also taking into account the possible presence of contaminants. Also, often seaweed is very high in substances such as iodine, where there is a public health concern of too low intakes in many EU MS, but where overconsumption could lead to health issues. Therefore, it is fine to include seaweed under the scope of a research proposal, but not as the only food category.

Question 4

The call mentions “A move to a plant-based diet with less red and processed meat, less salt, sugars, saturated and trans fats and additives, with more whole-grain cereals, fruit and vegetables, legumes and nuts, as well as processing efficiency and reduced losses and wastage along the food supply chains is needed”.

Is the use of seaweed (the full biomass) as new and sustainable ‘raw material’ in the food-industry considered in this call (seaweed not exactly being a plant)?

Answer 4

Seaweed is plant-based food and it can be an interesting supplement in the diets. It can be rich in proteins and fibres and low in fats, but these are of good quality. It seems appropriate to consider that it helps shifting towards more healthy and sustainable diets. However, it should indeed be consumed with care, also taking into account the possible presence of contaminants. Also, often seaweed is very high in substances such as iodine, where there is a public health concern of too low intakes in many EU MS, but where overconsumption could lead to health issues. Therefore, seaweed is fine to include under the scope of a research proposal, but not as the only food category.

Question 5

Does the “minimally processed” angle refer to the Health-impact due to the consumption, or is it referring to the environmental impact of the processing itself (waste-streams,...)?

Answer 5

Yes, the “minimally processed” angle refer to the health-impact.

Question 6

The topic is very much focused on “plant-based food, such as fruits, vegetables, wholegrain cereals, legume and nuts”. Could the seaweeds/macroalgae be considered as “plant-based foods”?

Answer 6

Seaweed is plant-based food and it can be an interesting supplement in the diets. It can be rich in proteins and fibres and low in fats, but these are of good quality. It seems appropriate to consider that it helps shifting towards more healthy and sustainable diets. However, it should indeed be consumed with care, also taking into account the possible presence of contaminants. Also, often seaweed is very high in substances such as iodine, where there is a public health concern of too low intakes in many EU MS, but where overconsumption could lead to health issues. Therefore, seaweed is fine to include under the scope of a research proposal, but not as the only food category.

Question 7

The topic mentions that food products should be “minimally processed”. There are different definitions for minimally processed foods. Would the NOVA classification, accepted by the FAO, be the reference for the definition of the minimally processed foods?

Answer 7

The NOVA classification is widely used and accepted and could be used even if it is not included in any EU food legislation for the time being.

Question 8

The question is about the specific point of the topic saying “Investigate, assess and develop improved predictive realistic models for quantifying effects on human health (risks/benefits) of processing and food ingredients (and/or mixture of them).” Does this sentence refers to study the effect that the technologies / processes / food products developed within the project may have on human health? Or it refers to a wider study about the effect of food processing / use of ingredients in general may have on human health?

Answer 8

This sentence at stakes refers to studying the effect that the technologies / processes / food products developed within the project may have on human health.

Question 9

I am contacting you to confirm that clinical trials are not in scope within the topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-2 and understand why the document (Tpl_Info on Clinical Studies (HE)) has been included attached.

Answer 9

The definition of clinical trial in the application form is the following:

“Clinical study means, for the purpose of this document, any systematic prospective or retrospective collection and analysis of health data obtained from individual patients or healthy persons in order to address scientific questions related to the understanding, prevention, diagnosis, monitoring or treatment of a disease, mental illness, or physical condition. It includes but it is not limited to clinical studies as defined by

Regulation 536/2014 (on medicinal products), clinical investigation and clinical evaluation as defined by Regulation 2017/745 (on medical devices), performance study and performance evaluation as defined by Regulation 2017/746 (on in vitro diagnostic medical devices)."

This topic requires to:

- *Develop new healthy, sustainable, diversified, minimally processed, reformulated, tasty and affordable food products and **assess their nutritional, structural, sensorial and functional properties to enhance health and well-being and to improve nutrition status.***
- *Develop and optimise new efficient methods/processes to reduce costs (e.g. energy, water, food raw materials) and impact on the environment to produce minimally processed functional food ingredients and food products and assess their nutritional, sensorial, structural and functional properties **to enhance health and well-being**, including the values provided by the plant/produce microbiome for nutritional qualities **and its effects on the human gut microbiome.***

*To address these issues, proposals **may carry out clinical studies/trials/investigations.***

Therefore, applicants have the opportunity to upload the related Annex, which is mandatory if the applicants propose to carry out this type of studies. From the technical point of view, the Annex is optional.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-5 'Creating smart and attractive tools to enhance healthy and sustainable food provision, eating and treating of food at home'](#)

Question 1

The topic states as eligibility criteria, the application of 'multi-actor approach' which main intake is that practitioners and (end) users (citizens included) are to be involved. How has to be intended the following sentence: "*Interventions should not target citizens directly, as full alignment with national policies and advice on nutrition and health needs to be ensured.*"?

Answer 1

Multi-actor approach should be applied in line with the requirements specified in the introduction to the Work Programme (p.21-23).

The sentence "Interventions should not target citizens directly, as full alignment with national policies and advice on nutrition and health needs to be ensured" implies to first check with national policies and advice and ensure full alignment before targeting citizens directly.

Question 2

"Interventions should not target citizens directly, as full alignment with national policies and advice on nutrition and health needs to be ensured". Should citizens be included as part of the multi-actor approach?

Answer 2

Multi-actor approach should be applied in line with the requirements specified in the introduction to the WP, p.21-23.

The sentence „Interventions should not target citizens directly, as full alignment with national policies and advice on nutrition and health needs to be ensured.” implies to first check with national policies and advice and ensure full alignment before targeting citizens directly.

Question 3

Could you please give us more information on what is precisely expected under the name “sample plan” referred to in the topic text? (“Develop a sample plan to make available to Member State and Associated Countries authorities for several countries on how to enhance uptake of beneficial tools and applications considering different socio-economic characteristics of citizens and national laws”)

Answer 3

The topic text does not indicate how the “sample plan” needs to look like, but it specifies the objectives it should pursue, i.e. to enhance the uptake of beneficial tools and applications (for example: delineate tools, activities, time plans, responsibilities, etc.) for several Member States and Associated Countries, taking into account socio-economic characteristics of citizens and national laws, which might differ across countries. The overall goal of the “sample plan” is therefore to make an impact in several countries, taking into account their specificities.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-9: Microbiome for flavour and texture in the organoleptic dietary shift.](#)

Question 1

What is exactly meant by “precision fermentation”? Is it allowed to use also genetically modified microorganisms? Could you specify what kind of microorganisms should be included in precision fermentation? If OGM were allowed, could you please specify whether WILD strains in particular might be included?

Answer 1

There is no EU definition of ‘precision fermentation’ although working definitions in the public domain refer to the production of specific materials by the fermentation activity of genetically modified microorganisms (GMM). There is indeed no EU regulation that forbids precision fermentation, but different regulatory regimes for the market authorisation may apply depending on the type of product. In principle, if the product is intended as food or feed and the GMM itself or its DNA (whether host or recombinant) are present in the final product, the product would most probably be treated under the GMO Regulation (EC) 1829/2003. If the product is intended as food and the GMM itself or its DNA (whether host or recombinant) are absent from the final product, the product would most probably be treated under the Novel Food Regulation (EU) 2015/2283.

In each and every case, the regulatory treatment of products derived from precision fermentation is done on a case-by-case basis. Please consult legal experts being part of the consortium for more clarification.

Furthermore, on 5 July 2023, the Commission presented a legislative proposal for a regulation on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed. The proposal is currently debated by the Council and the European Parliament. More information on the proposal is available at https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/genetically-modified-organisms/new-techniques-biotechnology_en

Question 2

- **It is not obvious if the “Additional annex with information on clinical trials” is mandatory. I suppose that, since there is no *, it is not mandatory but should be submitted if relevant to the project. Will you please confirm.**
- **Also in this context, clinical trials are defined as in foot note 1 in the Commission’s template attached? Will you please also confirm this.**
- **Should the applicants include a fully filled in clinical trial template (in my view, this shouldn’t be needed in this case), or is there a way that the flavour and taste intervention can be indicated in a more concise way?**

Answer 2

- *The “Annex with information on clinical trials” is not a mandatory Annex (i.e. it does not have an asterisk). However, this Annex is required for the proposals that include clinical trials / studies / investigations, as specified in Part A of the application template.*
- *As a reminder: “Clinical study means, for the purpose of this document, any systematic prospective or retrospective collection and analysis of health data obtained from individual patients or healthy persons in order to address scientific questions related to the understanding, prevention, diagnosis, monitoring or treatment of a disease, mental illness, or physical condition. It includes but it is not limited to clinical studies as defined by Regulation 536/2014 (on medicinal products), clinical investigation and clinical evaluation as defined by Regulation 2017/745 (on medical devices), performance study and performance evaluation as defined by Regulation 2017/746 (on in vitro diagnostic medical devices).”*
- *Clinical trials/studies/investigations are not explicitly requested in this topic. However, it is not excluded that proposals include clinical trial/studies/investigations to address the requirements of the topic and in this case, the applicants need to have the means to upload the corresponding annex.*

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-07 - Impact of the development of novel foods based on alternative sources of proteins](#)

Question 1

The main objective of this topic is the development of novel foods starting from the processing of specific alternative proteins such as: insect protein, micro and macro algae-based products, microbial proteins, food/aquaculture by-products.

What type of novel food is considered eligible within topic’s scope?

- is the development of novel foods limited to the alternative proteins mentioned within the topic text?

- can a type of project that involves the development of novel foods starting from the processing of sunflower seed protein considered eligible?

Answer 1

There are a lot of sources of alternative proteins, but the knowledge base for some is more developed than for others. There is a need for more research on insect protein, micro and macro algae-based products, microbial proteins, food/aquaculture by-products. That is the reason why these sources of alternative proteins have been specifically mentioned in the topic. Therefore, the applicants are expected to focus mainly on these. However, the applicants are free to develop activities on other sources as well, but those mentioned in the topic call should be prioritized.

Question 2

Regarding the outcome "Expansion of bioprospecting from the screening for new chemicals into biological function", should the proposal include research for new bioactive molecules from the marine environment and subsequent bioactivity tests? Or the proposal can fulfil this expected outcome by the investigation of the biological activity of enzymes and their biosynthetic products?

Answer 2

The stated outcome does not prescribe neither a precise research path nor specific tests. It is up to the applicant to assess how best to address the outcome and to justify this clearly in the proposal.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-10 EU-African Union cooperation on agroforestry management for climate change adaptation and mitigation](#)

Question 1

Topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-01-10 requires the establishment of local agroforestry pilot plots. Are there specific requirements about the geographic location of the plots?

Answer 1

The topic specifies several aspects that should be addressed by the proposals, including the establishment of local agroforestry pilot plots. There is no specific requirement as regards the geographic location of the plots, provided that this is consistent with the scope and expected outcomes of the topic, and with the objectives of the proposal.

In this topic, "local" refers to the size of the activity, which should be smaller than regional, national or continental.

Question2

- **Is an international research organisation based in Ethiopia eligible to receive funding? What if the international organisation is not research?**

- **Moreover, with regard to this condition “The following additional eligibility criteria apply: the places of establishment of at least two of *these* legal entities must be in the same geographical region of Africa (as defined by the African Union: https://au.int/en/member_states/countryprofiles2)”. To what word “these” is referred?**

Answer 2

Under this topic, international organisations, except those which have a headquarter in an EU Member State or Associated Country and International European research organisations(), are not automatically eligible for funding, even if they might have a headquarter or regional office in an African Union member state. However, they could be exceptionally eligible for funding in respect of this topic in case their participation is considered essential for implementing the action by the granting authority. (*)An International European research organisation is an international organisation, the majority of whose members are Member States or Associated Countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe.*

For this topic the following additional eligibility criteria apply: “Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the General Annexes, consortia must include at least three independent legal entities established in Africa.” “The places of establishment of at least two of these legal entities must be in the same geographical region of Africa (as defined by the African Union: https://au.int/en/member_states/countryprofiles2).” The word “these” refers to the “three independent legal entities established in Africa”.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-02-4-two-stage: Tackling outbreaks of plant pests

Question 1

As the project PURPEST focuses on the development of a detection method for several pests, could a proposal target one of the five pests targeted by the project PURPEST, but with a complementary approach, i.e. not focusing on the surveillance methods and strategies for early detection, but on the other objectives detailed in the scope of the call?

Or would the Commission consider that a proposal targeting one of the pests covered by PURPEST, even with a complementary approach, does not fall within the scope of this call because of the exception criteria?

Answer 1

The text clearly indicates the plant pests that are excluded from the scope: “with the exception of plant pests targeted in Horizon Europe (HORIZON-CL6-2021-FARM2FORK-01-04: Tackling outbreaks of plant pests)”. Therefore, the plant pests covered by the projects: BEXYL, REACT and PURPEST are excluded, even with a complementary approach.

Question 2

Could you please provide guidance on whether a pest categorized as a Protected zone quarantine pest under Annex III of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072 is eligible for submission to the topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-02-4-two-stage: Tackling outbreaks of plant pest?

Answer 2

As specified in the topic description, proposals should target one or more plant pest(s) that are:

- *either Union quarantine plant pests present in the EU, which are listed in Part B: Pests known to occur in the Union territory of Annex II “List of Union quarantine pests and their respective codes” of the [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2072](#),*
- *or Union quarantine pests which are priority pests in the EU, which are listed in Annex “List of priority pests” of the [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1702](#),*
with the exception of the plant pests targeted in the 3 projects funded under the HORIZON EUROPE topic HORIZON-CL6-2021-FARM2FORK-01-04: Tackling outbreaks of plant pests, i.e. [REACT](#), [BeXyl](#) and [PURPEST](#), which are excluded.

*The topic text does not explicitly exclude the inclusion of other plant pests such as *Erwinia amylovora* in the proposal. However, the main focus of the proposal must remain the targeted plant pests.*

The applicants should also take into account the plant pests already covered by other EU funded projects, such as [PATAFEST](#), to avoid overlaps with on-going projects.

Question 3

With reference to the topic in object, *Bactrocera dorsalis* (Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/1702 – priority pest) at the moment is carrying out an active infestation in Europe, specifically in Italy. The species has been found infesting various fruits, and more than 4 thousand specimens were trapped in the last two years. According to the “HE Main Work Programme 2023–2024 – 9. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment,” “proposals should target one or more plant pests that are either Union quarantine plant pests present in the EU or Union quarantine pests that are priority pests in the EU. These pests should be of concern for agriculture and/or forestry, with the exception of plant pests targeted in Horizon Europe (Plant pests of the topic HORIZON-CL6-2021-FARM2FORK-01-04: Tackling outbreaks of plant pests). There is a project funded in 2021 (ID 101059523) that is related to *B. dorsalis* and *Bactrocera zonata*. In this project, trials were conducted on *Ceratitis capitata* in Europe (since *B. dorsalis* was not present) and on *B. dorsalis* outside Europe. If a proposal on *B. dorsalis* submitted to study the phytophagous insect directly on European territory in an effort to stop the infestation, could this be grounds for exclusion?

Answer 3

As specified in the topic description, proposals should target one or more plant pest(s) that are:

- *either Union quarantine plant pests present in the EU, which are listed in Part B: Pests known to occur in the Union territory of Annex II “List of Union quarantine pests and their respective codes” of the [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2072](#),*
- *or Union quarantine pests which are priority pests in the EU, which are listed in Annex “List of priority pests” of the [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1702](#),*

with the exception of the plant pests targeted in the 3 projects funded under the HORIZON EUROPE topic **HORIZON-CL6-2021-FARM2FORK-01-04: Tackling outbreaks of plant pests**, i.e. REACT, BeXyl and PURPEST, which are excluded.
The project REACT targets *Bactrocera dorsalis* (Bd) and *B. zonata* (Bz), therefore these insect pests are excluded.

Question 4

The scope of this call it states that “Proposals should target one or more plant pest(s) that are either Union quarantine plant pests[3] present in the EU or Union quarantine pests which are priority pests [4] in the EU, and that are of concern for agriculture and/or forestry, with the exception of plant pests targeted in Horizon Europe. There are references to: part B of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072 for pests known to occur in the Union territory; and Annex to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/1702 for priority pests.

Q1: Does this mean that only pests occurring in annex of both regulations are considered? Or are the more recent added pathogens from EPPO lists ok?

Q2: Would “*Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* Tropical race 4” qualify? This pathogen is **EPPO quarantine alert listed** ([Fusarium oxysporum](https://www.eppo.int/eppep/eppep/eppep.html) f. sp. *cubense* Tropical race 4 (eppep.int)).

“*Fusarium* wilt or Panama disease caused by *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* is a severe fungal disease of banana, and a quarantine pest in most banana-producing countries. In the EPPO region, TR4 has been reported in Jordan (EPPO RS 2014/170), Israel (RS 2018/106 and 2019/059) and Türkiye (RS 2020/015). In Israel, the disease is subject to eradication measures. Considering the serious economic damage TR4 is inflicting to banana production and its limited occurrence in the EPPO region, it was felt useful to add TR4 to the EPPO Alert List.”

Answer 4

R1: As specified in the topic description, proposals should target one or more plant pest(s) that are:

- either Union quarantine plant pests present in the EU, which are listed in **Part B: Pests known to occur in the Union territory** of Annex II “**List of Union quarantine pests and their respective codes**” of the [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2072](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/2072/01),
- or Union quarantine pests which are priority pests in the EU, which are listed in Annex “**List of priority pests**” of the [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1702](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1702/01),

with the exception of the plant pests targeted in the 3 projects funded under the HORIZON EUROPE topic **HORIZON-CL6-2021-FARM2FORK-01-04: Tackling outbreaks of plant pests**, i.e. REACT, BeXyl and PURPEST, which are excluded.

R2: *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* is not a Union quarantine plant pests present in the EU, and is therefore excluded from this topic.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-FARM2FORK-0 2-7-two-stage. Minimising climate impact on aquaculture: mitigation and adaptation solutions for future climate regimes](#)

Question

One of the Expected Outcomes mentions « Implementation of innovations, such as dietary shifts and aspects of circularity, for a more sustainable and competitive European aquaculture enhancing aquaculture resilience to adverse consequences of climate change”. We interpret the "dietary shifts" part in two possible ways: (i) a change in the food supplied to the production (feed) or (ii) a change in the diets of final consumers of aquaculture products.

Answer

In the context of this topic, 'Dietary shifts' can be understood in both ways mentioned in the question, i.e. both as a change in the fish feed and/or as a change in the diets of consumers. Both interpretations are equally valid. Furthermore, 'Dietary shifts' are mentioned as indicative possible innovations under this topic and not as a requirement.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-01-5: Programmed biodegradation capability of bio-based materials and products, validated in specific environments](#)

Question 1

Does “Select applications for biodegradable non-single-use/single-use bio-based materials and products” indicate that the proposal should present both non-single-use AND single-use materials or can it be either or? For example, is fishing gear considered as a suitable application or do we need to include a single-use item in addition.

Answer 1

The proposal should present a selection of non single-use and/or single-use bio-based applications.

Question 2

Does “products to be safely re-used and re-manufactured, allowing for high-quality recycling and for biodegradability” indicate that the selected applications should have all these properties?

Answer 2

Yes, the selected applications should be both biodegradable and recyclable

Question 3

How broad this ecotoxicity testing /assessment should be, what should it include? Mentioned in the call text: “Develop manufacturing technologies of such bio-based materials and products with targeted performances:

- i) decreased carbon footprint (based on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and on the increase of carbon removals) and environmental impacts of the production processes;
- ii) improved circular life extension through predictive maintenance, suitability to be safely re-used and re-manufactured, allowing for recycling, and programmed integrity/biodegradation in specific environments, depending on the application, either



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- in controlled environment (i.e. aerobic digestion in composting plants, anaerobic digestion producing biogas) and in open environments, including in extreme environments in terms of physical conditions;
- iii) safe biodegradation in the specific environments as in point ii), especially considering the eco-toxicity and any impacts on natural ecosystems from biodegraded materials and from their additives and other components.

Answer 3

The assessment of eco-toxicity should be defined by applicants, taking into account the requirements/guidelines from REACH and ECHA supporting documents, to the extent decided by applicants and duly justified.

Question 4

The topic mentions “increasing durability and suitability of products to be safely re-used and re-manufactured, allowing for high quality recycling and for biodegradability”. When you designed a material to be reuse or recycled you are providing high resistance, thus compromising the biodegradation of this material (especially a programmed biodegradation). This means that one of the proposed use cases could be focus on reuse, remanufacture and recycling instead of programmed biodegradation?

Answer 4

The topic focusses on programmed biodegradation of bio-based materials and products, as stated in the title.

Moreover, the scope of the topic includes developing manufacturing technologies of bio-based materials and products with “(...) improved circular life extension through predictive maintenance, suitability to be safely re-used and re-manufactured, allowing for recycling, and programmed integrity/biodegradation in specific environments, depending on the application, (...)”.

This means that the materials/products should be able to biodegrade in specific environments AND to be “safely re-used and re-manufactured, allowing for recycling”. For example, in case such materials/products do not end in applications in those specific environments where they could biodegrade, they should be suitable for a circular life cycle.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-01-3: Innovative circular solutions for furniture

Clarification concerning minor formatting issues in the text of topic

- *Bullet points n. 2 and 3 under the expected outcome should be read together (‘Emergence of new value chains using upcycled, recycled and/or biobased resources, e.g. through industrial symbiosis, with particular attention to SMEs’).*
- *The ‘analyses conducted in the framework of luxury furniture’ showing that ‘the involvement of furniture companies in CE practices (...) still marginal (...)’ and the ‘the findings of an EU funded project’ according to which ‘furniture waste in the EU accounts for more than 4% of the total municipal solid waste stream’, both at p. 279, refer respectively to:*
 - *Silvius, G.; Ismayilova, A.; Sales-Vivó, V.; Costi, M. Exploring Barriers for Circularity in the EU Furniture Industry. Sustainability 2021, 13, 11072. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su131911072>.*



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o Project 2017-1-BE01-KA202-024752.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-01-1: Circular Cities and Regions Initiative's project development assistance \(CCRI-PDA\).](#)

Question 1

In the topic text, the following is stated: "Indicatively, the CCRI-PDA focuses on small and medium-sized circular economy investments of up to EUR 20 million (for a single proposal or a portfolio of proposals). The EU contribution per proposal should not exceed 10% of the related investment." What is meant by this that the EU contribution should not be more than 10% of the related investment? The footnote does not make it more clear.

Answer 1

The topic text specifies the following: "Indicatively, the CCRI-PDA focuses on small and medium-sized circular economy investments of up to EUR 20 million (for a single proposal or a portfolio of proposals). The EU contribution per proposal should not exceed 10% of the related investment." (...) "Proposals should justify the budget for the project development assistance needed based on the expected investment portfolio to be set up. This includes the amount of investments that is expected to be triggered and the respective leverage factors to be achieved."

The assistance provided under this PDA should trigger real investments, meaning that every euro spent on PDA support (via grant) should lead to at least 10 euros in investment. In other words: project owners (selected for getting project development assistance / advisory services) may receive financial and technical advice for up to 10% of the total investment needs.

Question 2

At the level of the Specific Conditions, a possible "financial support to third parties" is not indicated but what you can find within the Scope is:

Indicatively, the CCRI-PDA focuses on small and medium-sized circular economy investments of up to EUR 20 million²⁸⁹ (for a single proposal or a portfolio of proposals).

The EU contribution per proposal should not exceed 10% of the related investment.

Proposals should justify the budget for the project development assistance needed based on the expected investment portfolio to be set up. This includes the amount of investments that is expected to be triggered and the respective leverage factors to be achieved.

So, if the contribution should not exceed 10% of the related investment, this could be 2M€ as a maximum. But...this contribution would be a direct budget, (similar to a cascading fund) or in the services of the project?

Answer 2

FAQs basate sulle risposte degli officer della Commissione Europea, a specifiche richieste di utenti e NCP sui topic di CL6 per il WP 2023-2024

- *The total indicative budget for this topic is EUR 6.00 million. Only 1 PDA project is expected to be funded under this call. Through this PDA project, several investment projects will be able to get PDA support.*
- *As the topic budget is EUR 6.00 million and the PDA support per investment is max EUR 2.00 million, the PDA project should lead to a minimum of 3 investment projects.*
- *The project owners (selected for getting PDA - project development assistance) may receive financial and technical advice for up to 10% of their total investment needs. In other words: every euro spent on PDA support should lead to at least 10 euros in investment.*
- *The total indicative budget should cover both the operating costs (for providing the PDA advisory services) and the advisory support provided itself.*

Question 3

And about the entities involved in those circular economy projects:

- **Should they be part of the consortium?**
- **Or an open call should be launched (as in the FSTP)?**
- **Or the identification of the investment projects should be done together with CCRI?**

Answer 3

- *This is flexible. Proposals may either select the projects that will benefit from the PDA support at the time of their project proposal writing, and in that case, already include the beneficiaries as project partners. The successful proposal may also consider launching (an) open call(s) for proposals at the beginning of the project. Both options are possible.*
- *We would warmly invite you to have a look at the PDA projects selected as part of the previous CCRI-related calls. There have been 7 CCRI-related PDA projects supported from 2020 onwards under Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe:*
 - [*HOOP – Hub of circular cities boosting platform to foster investments for the valorisation of urban biowaste and wastewater \[2020-2024\]*](#)
 - [*BioBoost – Catalysing Investment into Catalan Bioeconomy via One-Stop-Shop Accelerator \[2022-2026\]*](#)
 - [*RESOURCE – REgional project development aSsistance fOr the Uptake of an aRagonese Circular Economy \[2022-2025\]*](#)
 - [*CircularInvest - Powering access to investment for next generation circular economy initiatives in cities and regions \[2022-2026\]*](#)
 - [*DECISO – Developers of Circular Solutions \[2022-2025\]*](#)
 - [*DEFINITE-CCRI - Deal Engine, with finance, investment and technical expertise for the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative \[2022-2025\]*](#)
 - [*InvestCEC - Supporting the transition towards circular economy in European cities and regions: Development of a replicable model for local circular economy projects \[2022-2025\]*](#)
- *If you look for instance at the [DECISO](#) project, you will see that 4 projects were already pre-selected, while the [CircularInvest](#) project just launched its 2nd call for expression of interest.*

Question 4

1. **In the topic text, it is said “Indicatively, the CCRI-PDA focuses on small and medium-sized circular economy investments of up to EUR 20 million (for a single proposal or a portfolio of proposals)”. Is 20M€ the maximum investment that is expected in this PDA or it could be higher, (although the maximum per project would be 20 M€)???? To know if there is a maximum to the total**

investment in the topic is really important in terms of the consortium size and the activities to be develop.

2. **Would the 10% spent on PDA support (2M€ in the case of 20M€ of investment project) includes both, the financial and the technical advice?**

Answer 4

As hinted in the formulation of the topic text, the given maximum size of the circular economy investment projects supported by this PDA proposal (maximum EUR 20 million) is indicative, and mentioned for the sake of giving an idea of the scope and ambition expected under this call (min. 3 investment projects supported). Previously, we also mentioned that every euro spent on PDA support should lead to at least 10 euros in investment - although supported investment projects may actually lead to a greater return on investment. The objective of the PDA is to improve investment projects' maturity through high-quality technical and financial advisory support tailored to the project needs. The topic text mentions several examples of possible forms the PDA support could take: "The CCRI-PDA should provide support for those activities necessary to prepare and mobilise finance for investment projects, such as feasibility studies, stakeholder and community mobilisation, business plans and preparation for tendering procedures or setting up a specific financing scheme/financial engineering."

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-02-2-two-stage: Increasing the circularity in plastics value chains.](#)

Question 1

- **Can you please tell me if there is a restriction on the type of plastic in the topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-02-2-two-stage: Increasing the circularity in plastics value chains?**
- **Are all types of plastics and all types of polymers in the scope of the topic?**

Answer 1

Neither the scope nor the expected outcomes limit the choice of plastic materials to be addressed under this topic. Applicants are expected to choose a material that is relevant from an environmental and economic perspective. While all plastics are in scope, this is certainly not the case for all polymers as not all polymers are plastics.

Question 2

We would like to know if rubber, as a polymer, is eligible as a material for potential use cases or pilot lines. Some plastics products include a rubber seal for tightness, and they would be the kind of products targeted by the consortium, for which we would like to focus on a holistic recycling possibility. Also, critical raw materials are mentioned in the call text, and natural rubber is one of the materials mentioned.

Answer 2

In the EU regulatory context, rubber and plastics are considered as two distinct material types despite the fact that they are both polymeric. Certain plastic products indeed do contain rubber seals or gaskets as a functional component of a given product. In specific plastics value chains, such rubber components are a necessary part of a system/product to fulfil its functionality (e.g. bottles, containers, medical devices, etc.). In such value chain(s), it indeed is useful to take the rubber component into account as part of the complete

product made of (mainly) plastic. Where such rubber component has a justified function, it therefore can be taken into account for a potential use case. However, such case must be justified in the context of the whole plastics value chain using the rubber component as functional part of its system/final product.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-02-1-two-stage: Circular solutions for textile value chains through innovative sorting, recycling, and design for recycling](#)

Clarification about the expected outcomes of the topic after the Info day.

The expected outcome of topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio-02-1-two-stage explicitly establishes that project results are expected to contribute to at least two of the outcomes listed at page 371 of the Work Programme, and not to all of them. In this respect we would like to confirm to you (and in turn, to any prospective applicants that contacted you) that what is laid down in the Work Programme shall prevail over the erroneous statement made at the Info Days.

Question

The call is apparently focused on cotton, PET and polycotton blends. However, there are many other natural fibers and synthetic polymers used in the textile sector (e.g. hemp, linen, polypropylene, polyamides...). We wonder if proposals must be limited to cotton, PET and polycotton blends or if applicants are also encouraged to cover other raw materials.

Answer

*With regard to recycling, proposals are expected to **focus on cotton, polycotton or PET**, which represent the vast majority of materials used in garments and which are explicitly targeted by the topic. **In addition**, the same technologies for the recycling of these materials should be applied to other types of fibres (natural or synthetic) where applicable and technically suitable as indicated in the scope (i.e. “the application of these technologies in research and innovation should also be extended to other types of fibres”).*

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-CircBio- 02-6-two-stage: From silos to diversity – small-scale biobased demonstration pilots.](#)

Question

The call CL6-2024-CircBio-02-6-two-stage requests to develop small-scale demonstration pilots at TRL 6-7. Does this mean that the call requires necessarily to demonstrate each component of the value chain, including conversion technologies at TRL6-7 in the form of a pilot? Or can the pilots refer to the overall value chain, without the explicit need to include the conversion technology?

Answer

As indicated in the specific call conditions, activities are expected to achieve TRL 6-7 by the end of the project. Moreover, with regard to value chain coverage, it should be observed that the topic text includes references, such as “demonstration of replicable and scalable, innovative bioeconomy-oriented production

and business models”, “feedstock availability and technology options to better valorise underutilised biomass” or “development of new materials, products, and services”, which indicate that proposals should be based on a sound business case and address the entire value chain. In the scope, proposals are further asked to “demonstrate suitable processes and technologies to produce high-value bio-based materials and products”, which would imply the conversion of feedstock.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-ZEROPOLLUTION-01-1: Demonstrating how regions can operate within safe ecological and regional nitrogen and phosphorus boundaries.

Question 1

The topic text states that "the aim is to show how N/P-relevant sectors [...] in a given region can limit N/P emissions to air, water and soil from their activities by respecting pre-established regional N/P budgets and applying N/P balancing practices". The applicant's question is if there is a requirement to involve more than one region in the proposal. It seems that the formulation could be interpreted as it being sufficient that only one region is looked at in a project (of course as long as actors from at least three countries participate in the proposal).

Answer 1

There is no requirement to involve more than one region. It is sufficient to have just one region.

Question 2

The other question is about a possible definition for the term "region". Do you have a definition you could share? Region could e.g. be understood in an administrative way, but also in a functional way such as in a river catchment area.

Answer 2

A region, within the scope of this topic, is an area defined either on an administrative basis, or on a functional basis. All NUTS levels can be considered, but also any other options. The proposal shall duly justified the selected option.

Question 3

Does the given region need to come from the Mediterranean lighthouse countries?

Answer 3

No. This is not mentioned in the topic.

Question 4

Can projects focus on the Baltic Sea macro region and its neighboring water basins?

Answer 4

Yes.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-ZEROPOLLUTION-02-2-two-stage: Innovative technologies for zero pollution, zero-waste biorefineries.

Clarification about the integration of Social Sciences and Humanity (SSH) in the topic.

The scope of the aforementioned topic at page 379 of the Work Programme does not foresee the integration of SSH disciplines. In this respect we would like to confirm to you (and in turn, to any prospective applicants that contacted you) that what is laid down in the Work Programme shall prevail over the erroneous statement made at the Info Days.

Question 1

It is mandatory to include as a case study a biorefinery operating? If yes, which might be the TRL of this biorefinery at the start of the project?

Answer 1

It is mandatory to include a case-study in a selected biorefinery. The TRL of the biorefinery is not defined in the topic. However, in order to develop a case study, the biorefinery should be operating. The (ending) TRL defined in the topic refers to the “integrated zero-pollution technical solutions” as described in the scope (Design integrated technical solutions reducing exhaust flows from bio-based processes through innovative technologies of extraction, recirculation, fractionation and conversion of such flows, to reach the zero-pollution ambition...)

Question 2

Concerning the integrated monitoring systems, it is needed collection of data in a biorefinery operating or it might be enough with virtual validation, it means results are obtaining by modelling?

Answer 2

As the effective reduction of pollutant emissions, affecting soil, water and air quality, noise levels and waste production, should be developed and validated through an integrated monitoring systems, operated by the industry at the level of the biorefinery, this task should be better performed in an existing and operating biorefinery. Basically, the one of the above-mentioned case-study.

This is well explained in the topic’s text, also reported by the applicant ‘Develop and validate integrated monitoring systems, operated by the industry at the level of the biorefinery, of the effective reduction of pollutant emissions, affecting soil, water and air quality, noise levels and waste production from biorefineries.’

The use of the digital tools, mentioned in the task ‘Pilot and validate digital innovation for bio-based processes enabling the zero-pollution and zero-waste biorefinery ambition. Digital tools may include data sharing platforms for the management of supply and value chains, as well as industrial symbiosis operations between biorefineries, industrial hubs, etc.’, is not referred to a specific (existing) biorefinery. Piloting and validation may be performed with results obtained by modelling.

Question 3

Since a biorefinery has to be included, we were wondering whether we need to develop a biorefinery or we can use a existing biorefinery for the case study. In the later case, we have a biorefinery in mind, which is the biorefinery developed for the XX Project. However, this biorefinery is not placed entirely in a single site, as there are two distant places where the main parts are operating. Is this a problem?

Answer 3

No.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-ZEROPOLLUTION-02-1-two-stage: Holistic approaches for effective monitoring of water quality in urban areas.

Question 1

Based on the current scientific practices and the limited budget foreseen for the projects funded within this topic, it is technically not feasible to monitor all types of pollutants. Can applicants focus on specific pollutants? Is there a specific focus on pollutants that applicants should address?

Answer 1

The topic is asking proposals to “develop an integrated and harmonised approach to monitor all sources of surface and groundwater pollution and their impact” and not to monitor all type of pollutants. In this context we considered that the indicative budget for proposals is sufficient to address (as much as possible) all type of pollutants.

Question 2

An expected outcome of the project should be "Sound, safer and risk-based urban water quality management plans". The terminology "risk-based" is not defined in the topic text or in the destination introduction. Could you please provide a clear definition on how a "risk-based" approach should look like in the context of the topic?

Answer 2

“Risk-based approach” in water has been defined in several state of the art publications available in the open literature, as well as, in EU water related policies. For instance the revised Drinking Water Directive includes a dedicated article on risk-based approach to water safety which provides information of the specific elements of such a risk-based approach (Article 7). The recently proposed recast of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive also propose a methodology to identify risks on a catchment (Article 18). These piece of legislations can be taken as example to justify the approach retained by the applicants.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-CLIMATE-01-3 “Paludiculture: large-scale demonstrations

Question

In the call text section Scope it says: “Establish large-scale paludiculture demonstration in 3 areas of at least 50 hectares each”. Is there any guidance on how paludiculture is defined here? What should the demonstration site cover: peatlands and/or wetlands?

In more detail, does this mean that the entirety of the 50 hectares or more should be converted to paludiculture? Or could this apply to the catchment area, for example smaller sites which are linked in one 50 ha catchment area and together form a demonstration site? E.g. peatland with surrounding wetlands?

Answer

Neither the topic nor the relevant Work Programme provide for a specific definition of paludiculture. It is up to the applicants to explain their own understanding of the concept of paludiculture, the land uses to which it can be applied and the focus of work.

The topic asks to establish at least three demonstration sites, each having a minimum size of at least 50ha. As no further requirements are set, applicants are free to propose to work on any type of paludiculture, and (combinations) of management practices that would contribute to the objectives of the topic.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-COMMUNITIES-01-3: Participation and empowerment of Arctic coastal, local, and indigenous communities in environmental decision-making

Question 1

It is currently unclear from the topic text which topics and approaches must be covered/used and which are optional. For instance, it says that proposals must address at least two out of four matters of concern (adaptation and mitigation; socio-economic changes; health and well-being; gender aspects). Yet, later it says that proposals should explore how different ways of knowing [...] to enhance understanding and to better respond to the impacts of climate [...] changes. Therefore, is climate adaptation an optional theme or do proposals have to include this theme?

Answer 1

*Please notice that this topic invites for multi-actor approach projects, see Introduction of the HE Cluster 6 WP: “The genuine and sufficient involvement of key actors should take place **all over the whole course of the project: from participation in development of the project idea**, planning and experiments to implementation, communication and dissemination of results ...”. Four European Green Deal (EGD) priorities (see topic text) need to be considered for the development of the project ideas with the Arctic key actors. **In dialogue with them, at least two (or more) most relevant ones can be chosen that are most significantly going to contribute to EGD objectives** by addressing the most important and/or urgent local needs and challenges according to the Arctic coastal, local and indigenous communities, as it is **not the intention to force them to work on a priority that is not of a highest priority related to the EGD in their local context**. Still, **scientists would need to ensure through their scientific knowledge that the added value of all four matters of concern are made clear to the key actors**, in such a way that an informed decision can be taken through co-creation. Please also notice that the **integration of the gender dimension** (sex and gender analysis) in research and innovation content is a **mandatory requirement** for this topic, as applicable to all topics, unless it has been specified in the topic text that it is not mandatory. Therefore, an appropriate level of attention to gender aspects is required anyway. It needs to be clear and sufficiently justified to the evaluation panel why specific matters of concern have been selected or receive more attention than others in the co-created proposal.*

Question 2

The call text says: “Several potential coastal sectors can be addressed, however the proposal will ensure inclusion of marine protection, food security, climate adaptation and resilience strategies, but also other

activities such as leisure activities and eco-socio-compatible tourism development in coastal areas.” Does this mean that all of these themes have to be included in the proposal?

Answer 2

Just as for the matters of concern, all the potential coastal sectors need to be considered for dialogue with Arctic key actors in the multi-actor approach to develop the project idea and proposal. The weight given to each of them in the proposal would be a result of this dialogue, of which marine protection is an indispensable cross-cutting aspect, combined with a specifically defined level of activity concerning food security, climate adaptation and resilience and eco-socio-compatible tourism and leisure activities, for which latter there is no obligation to develop this, but depending on the local needs and challenges towards significant ecological transition that Arctic key actors want to be fully part of.

Question 3

Similarly, the call text says: “The project should include representation from multiple disciplines of research, including environmental, marine, social, cultural, health, design.” Does this mean that all of these disciplines have to be included?

Answer 3

According to the expected outcomes of the topic, it is obvious that environmental, marine, social and cultural are indispensable to be included, while health and design would need to be considered as well and given an appropriate weight, in relation to the relative attention paid to the matters of concern being addressed in the topic.

Question 4

Does the title of the call “Participation and empowerment of Arctic coastal, local, and indigenous communities in environmental decision-making” and the call text mean that the local AND indigenous Arctic communities need to be also coastal?

Answer 4

The topic refers to Arctic coastal, local and indigenous communities.

Question 5

Further, does “coastal” here mean only Atlantic or marine, or could Arctic communities along rivers and lakes be included?

Answer 5

While there is a marine coastal dimension that proposals need to take into account, they can also have in scope Arctic local and indigenous communities living by inland waters, such as rivers and lakes.

Question 6

Could you please clarify? Saami communities in Finland would be excluded from participating this call if “coastal” was considered as a strict requirement for the indigenous communities.

Answer 6

Therefore, ‘coastal’ refers also to inland waters, not only to seas and ocean. In addition, it should be noted that the adjective ‘local’ encompasses ‘indigenous communities’, which means that non-indigenous people living in an area in scope of a proposal can also be covered.

HORIZON-CL6-2024-CLIMATE-01-5: Climate-smart use of wood in the construction sector to support the New European Bauhaus

Question 1

New buildings : One of the Expected Outcomes of the topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-CLIMATE-01-5 states the objective of “making the construction sector more renewable and circular especially for existing buildings” but no reference on new buildings/constructions is made on the whole topic. Could solutions proposed be addressed exclusively or partially to new buildings?

Answer 1

The topic does not exclude new buildings. However, proposals are expected to contribute to the renovation wave strategy. In addition, the scope also includes a reference to the “refurbishment of buildings”.

Question 2

Low-quality wood : In the list of “wills” of the topic within the Scope, the first bullet point refers to the utilization of low-quality wood among other wood sources/types. What this low-quality wood refers to, could it be e.g., small diameter wood, short logs, curved logs, wood from bushes, others or it refers to something different?

Answer 2

The topic encourages the use of underused primary and secondary wood resources in the construction sector, which includes unspecified types of “low-quality wood”. Depending on the particular characteristics and use, all of the mentioned examples may refer to low-quality wood. References to environmental considerations in the expected outcomes, such as “long-term carbon storage” or “increased resource efficiency and minimisation of environmental footprint” can serve as a further guidance in this context.

Question 3

In this topic we are having both Lump Sum and Financial Support to Third Parties. The question has to do with the WP including the cascading fund and when this WP would be considered as finalized, either when the cascading funds have been assigned to the third parties or when the third parties have concluded their activities. This is important in relation with the design/structure of the work plan of the project. Thanks in advance for your support.

Answer 3

The requirements for proper implementation are the same for all types of grants. This includes proper implementation of projects/activities funded in cascade (FSTP) as described in Annex I of the Grant Agreement (GA).

In this regard, the payment of lump sum shares in relation to FSTP-related activities will depend on:

- How exactly these FSTP-related activities are described in the proposal/Annex I of the GA (e.g., defined as a specific work package with specific activities spelled out, which will facilitate the assessment of the degree of completion of this work package and the related activities)
- To which extent these activities, as described in the Annex I, have been completed.

- The information provided in the specific reporting tab for FSTP, which must be completed in the same way in all grants using FSTP (N.B.: this includes the amounts awarded and paid).

To sum up, declaring an FSTP work package as completed (or claiming the costs for FSTP in an actual cost grant) must be in line with and supported by the actual implementation of these FSTP activities as described in Annex 1. The selection and assignment of funds to the third parties is only a first step. The FSTP tasks, and therefore the corresponding work package(s), can be considered completed when all activities of the FSTP work package(s) have been completed. Our understanding is that this includes:

- that the sub-projects have been carried out satisfactorily by the third parties,
- that this was verified by the beneficiary,
- that the beneficiary paid the third parties,
- that the beneficiary reported these activities in the technical report (including the dedicated tab for FSTP under continuous reporting).

This is not different to the requirements of proper implementation in actual cost grants under Horizon Europe.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-CLIMATE-02-3: Overcoming barriers and delivering innovative solutions to enable the green transition](#)

Question

- **Is it mandatory to cover all the areas included in the topic text (i.e., water resilience, circular economy, biodiversity, zero pollution and climate change) in each proposal?**
- **A proposal focus on e.g. circular economy with reference to biobased products, is within the Scope of the topic?**

Answer

- *Each individual proposal does not have to cover all the aspects listed in the topic scope. The proposals should identify barriers to the uptake by end users of new knowledge and innovation for the green transition on aspects such as water resilience, circular economy, biodiversity, zero pollution, and climate change.*
- *The proposals have to develop creative or disruptive solutions to overcome identified barriers, taking advantage of technological and digital tools as well as innovative dissemination strategies, organisational models and educational activities. The applicants may decide to apply the solutions to specific products as long as this can contribute to overcome barriers to the green transition under the areas covered by Cluster 6.*

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-COMMUNITIES-01-1: Unlock the potential of the New European Bauhaus in urban food system transformation](#)

Question

What is the significance of the reference to geographical areas and NUTS levels in the topic text? In the context of this topic, geographical areas of the European Union and Associated Countries are NUTS level 1 regions of European Union Member States and of Associated Countries for which they are defined. There is no further reference to geographical areas in the topic otherwise and as the topic is focused around urban and peri-urban food systems, it is difficult to understand how this can be solved at NUTS 1 level.

Answer

- *The reference to “geographical areas of the European Union and Associated Countries are NUTS level 1 regions [...]” is only relevant for the ‘evaluation procedure’ that is going to be used for this topic as specified under the ‘specific conditions’ of the topic, namely: “To ensure a balanced portfolio covering demonstration activities in diverse geographical areas of the European Union and Associated Countries, grants will be awarded first to the highest ranked application according to the standard procedure described in Horizon Europe General Annexes D and F, followed by other applications that are the highest ranked among those that ensure the most complementary geographical coverage, provided that the applications attain all thresholds. [...]”.*
- *As specified in the topic, the proposals should demonstrate place-based solutions considering their specific resource pool and place. However, when assessing geographical coverage (as provided by the evaluation procedure under “specific conditions”), the evaluation will take into account the location of the demonstration activities by looking at the NUTS level 1 regions where these activities take place, and ensure complementarity of the locations, at NUTS level 1, between the different proposals.*

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-COMMUNITIES -02-2-two-stage: New sustainable business and production models for farmers and rural communities](#)

Question

- **What is the consequence of not having a confirmation / agreement with MOST at the time the project is selected for funding?**
- **Do the applicants need a confirmation from MOST when submitting the first stage of the proposal?**

Answer

- *The call conditions of this topic do not require to have the confirmation /agreement of co-funding from MOST. Therefore, this is not checked at the time of the selection of the proposals and/or signature of the grant agreement. However, the consortium needs to ensure that the Chinese participants are able to implement the action tasks assigned to them in the proposal, even if they do not receive funding from MOST.*

- *The call conditions of this topic do not require to have the confirmation /agreement of co-funding from MOST. Therefore this is not required for the evaluation of the proposals submitted to call HORIZON-CL6-2024-COMMUNITIES-02-2-two-stage.*

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-6: Develop innovative applications to support the European Green Deal, building on meteorological satellite data](#)

Question 1

One of the outcome mentioned in the topic is “Demonstrated use of these applications for Earth Systems predictions, long-term climate monitoring (i.e., re-analysis within the Copernicus climate services context) and disaster risk prediction and reduction (e.g., within the framework of the Copernicus Emergency Management service).” A mandatory input for the “re-analysis” is a full access to the underlying models and algorithms of the existing Copernicus climate services.

- Since these models are under control of ECMWF and their source-codes are not publicly accessible (available), does this mean that ECMWF should be a mandatory partner of any consortium? What exactly is meant here by the term "re-analysis"?

Answer 1

The text contains a clerical error. The re-analysis mentioned is mentioned as an example “e.g.”. Please note that by no means the topic should be interpreted to stipulate the inclusion any legal entities in the consortium. What is meant under this outcome is that the data products developed should be usable for long-term monitoring purposes in an operational environment.

Question 2

Both the Copernicus Climate Service and the Copernicus Emergency Service need to be addressed. Is it possible to place a clear focus on one of the two services and subordinate the other service?

Answer 2

Yes.

Question 3

The scope of the topic specifics that “The tools and services developed under the successful applications should be made available for future integration in the Copernicus programme and in the common topical European open infrastructure, Destination Earth. Open-source data/information requires open access to data that is associated with important benefits for the society and economy when reused.” The advanced tools and services that are to be developed should be made available open-source and free-of-charge, for instance, for their potential integration into the Copernicus programme and Destination Earth.

- What are the applicable IPR rules here?

- If the services developed are made available in the Copernicus service after the end of the project, will there be funding for the data storage, data servers, data maintenance, data monitoring..., Is there funding available specifically to cover these costs, or will they be expected to be covered by the consortium of the (former) project?

Answer 3

It is up to the consortium to define the IPR rules and to plan for the use of appropriate licenses (i.e., creative commons open source licences). They need to be foreseen in a way that the products can be re-used in the named programmes without raising IPR issues.

- *There will not be any funding available for this purpose after the end of the project under its Grant Agreement, in line with the provisions of the Horizon Europe legal base. It is up to the consortium to plan for the sustainability of services developed, which should be implemented with an operational or commercial service provider.*

Question 4

What exactly is meant by the term 're-analysis' in topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-6? Is it required that the ECMWF be a partner of any consortium as the use of their not publicly available source codes is compulsory?

Answer 4

The text contains a clerical error. The 're-analysis' is mentioned as an example "e.g.". Please note that by no means the topic should be interpreted to impose the inclusion of any legal entities in the consortium. What is meant under this outcome is that the data products developed should be usable for long-term monitoring purposes in an operational environment.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-7: Enhancing working conditions and strengthening the work force through digital and data technologies – the potential of robotics and augmented reality in agriculture.](#)

Question 1

The type of action funded under this topic is a Research and Innovation Action and activities should reach TRL 7-8. That is contradictory. At this high TRL, activities cover the implementation and testing of technologies in the field and there is not much room for research and development as it would be expected in a RIA. Could you please comment on that; How should applicants deal with this contradiction?

Answer 1

In the call table it reads "Activities are expected to achieve TRL 7-8 (according to the activity) by the end of the project –". In the section "Scope" the activities are listed, and the activities, for which achieving TRL 7-8 is expected, are clearly identified through the addition of "(TRL 7-8)" at the end of description of the activities concerned. Thus, there are activities, which are more research-oriented, and other more

innovation-oriented. The research-oriented may inform the more innovation oriented. Please, note that the projects supported under this call are expected to also cover social sciences.

Question 2

From the topic text, it is not clear whether it is expected that projects should cover robotics and augmented reality or either robotics or augmented reality. Could you please clarify that?

Answer 2

Overall projects should address both – augmented reality and robotics. For the points listed under scope, which are to be addressed by the project, one can see that some of the activities have to be addressed through at least one of them (robotics or augmented reality).

Question 3

The wording in the scope is not clear: “Development of augmented-reality based solutions to improve working conditions, safety and failure avoidance, and to further increase robotic performance.” Is it expected that robotic performance is increased with the help of augmented-reality?

Answer 3

No, it is not expected that robotic performance is increased through augmented reality. Robotic performance should increase. Augmented reality and robotics may well complement each other, but it is not pre-defined that the increase in robotic performance has to be achieved through augmented reality.

Question 4

Is it required to cover a project period of 60 months?

Answer 4

No, a project period of 60 months is not required. Project proposers have the opportunity and are encouraged to consider a longer project duration up to 60 months, for instance, to achieve the higher TRLs for parts of the project.

Question 5

From the topic text, it is not clear whether it is expected that projects should cover robotics and augmented reality or either robotics or augmented reality. Could you please clarify this?

Answer 5

Overall projects should address both – augmented reality and robotics. The call text should be read carefully. The bullet points listed under scope, which are to be addressed by the project, clearly indicate that some of the activities have to be addressed through at least one of them (robotics or augmented reality). Both augmented reality and robotics may complement each other but this is not predefined.

[HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-9: Thematic networks to compile and share knowledge ready for practice](#)

Question



APRE

Agenzia per la Promozione
della Ricerca Europea

- One of our clients would like to participating in the „HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-9: Thematic networks to compile and share knowledge ready for practice” call, but they’re not sure if aquaculture is included as a part of agriculture in the call text, or excluded from this topic.
- I have been asked by a stakeholder whether a partner focusing on aquaculture could be involved in a project answering to the topic HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-9, or is aquaculture completely excluded ?

Answer

Although aquaculture is not explicitly excluded form the topic, the focus of the topic is on agriculture and forestry, i.e., land-based primary production.

Everything you need to know about the Hungarian entities’ participation in Horizon Europe

Question

In the call text section Scope it says: “Establish large-scale paludiculture demonstration in 3 areas of at least 50 hectares each”. Is there any guidance on how paludiculture is defined here? What should the demonstration site cover: peatlands and/or wetlands?

In more detail, does this mean that the entirety of the 50 hectares or more should be converted to paludiculture? Or could this apply to the catchment area, for example smaller sites which are linked in one 50 ha catchment area and together form a demonstration site? E.g. peatland with surrounding wetlands?

Answer

Neither the topic nor the relevant Work Programme provide for a specific definition of paludiculture. It is up to the applicants to explain their own understanding of the concept of paludiculture, the land uses to which it can be applied and the focus of work.

The topic asks to establish at least three demonstration sites, each having a minimum size of at least 50ha. As no further requirements are set, applicants are free to propose to work on any type of paludiculture, and (combinations) of management practices that would contribute to the objectives of the topic.