



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)
Department B - LIFE and H2020 Energy, Environment, Resources
Unit B3 - LIFE and CIP Eco-Innovation
Head of Unit

CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION SYNTHESIS (SUMMARY REPORT)

Concept Note Award Criteria according to Call for Proposals 2020

Proposal number: **LIFE20 GIE/IT/001395**

Proposal acronym: **WATER IMPACT FOR LIFE**

Proposed EU requested funding in €: **1,197,015**

Award Criteria	AW1	AW2	Pass Score*
Max. score and Min. passing score	20 (pass 5)	30 (pass 10)	50 (pass 15)
Final scores	11	16	27

(* Total score must be at least 15 according to criteria 1 + 2)

1. Award criterion 1

- The targeted environmental problem of increased water consumption and water pollution is generally defined and suitable to be addressed by the information interventions. The CN provides an acceptable basic description of the preoperational context related to the environmental impact of the water footprint of drinking water and consumption of water for agriculture (e.g. wine) production. The CN explains that excess nitrogen and phosphate use for intensive production of food causes severe impacts on aquatic ecosystems and the availability of drinking water resources. However, the CN has no baseline data in the target areas in terms of pollution with nitrogen and phosphate or water consumed. In addition, the CN insufficiently explains the level of awareness and behavioural patterns on water consumption, pollution in agriculture and the drinking water sectors in Italy.
- The partnership seems generally justified and it is comprised of beneficiaries (universities, public bodies, private companies) adequately described with relevant expertise in water management, waste water management, environmental protection, wine production, awareness raising, education and research. However, school authorities are not included in the partnership despite a big component developed within schools.
- Overall, the action plan is fluently described and mostly in line with the LIFE requirements/structure, but lacks quantified data and does not appear robust and convincing. In fact, it is not always easy to envisage the activities proposed and not clear what will be realized, when, where, etc. The CN plans to capitalize on previous water related projects for the sensitization of the population and implement at school level, with teachers actively involved through an offer of a water-dedicated teaching programme. The water footprint assessment schemes will focus on drinking water distribution and grape production. However, this approach with geochemical and petrographic survey methodology for water footprint calculation appear excessive/complicated, with activities focused on the construction and testing of water footprint assessment methods in selected areas, and for selected services and products to be considered as pilot schemes for further development. Therefore, it appears as a more research orientated project than communication and awareness efforts. Expected results are a key weakness because they are not clearly linked with actions and not well defined.
- The CN demonstrates a partly coherent project design because the identified environmental problem of increased water consumption is likely to be only partly addressed by the proposed action plan. The limitations of insufficiently presented actions and expected results, related to awareness raising and the lack of a clear baseline situation on current water consumption in water drinking and agriculture (wine production) sectors, reduce the merits of project design. A key weakness is that target audiences (being an information project) are not clearly defined, quantified and discussed. Therefore, the CN keeps a rather generic approach, without an effort to tailor messages to specific target groups. Stakeholders are not really identified in the CN; it remains unclear to what groups/types the CN is referring to, when stakeholders are mentioned.
- The CN appears as partly feasible because it demonstrates acceptable technical quality merits in terms of partnership experience and a suitable project duration. However, the lack of baseline, insufficiently mature action plan and expected results,

as well as relatively high financial means needed, lead to a reduction in the project feasibility overall. Additionally, the CN takes into account only some inadequately explained potential risks (e.g. deviation of the project budget) and unsatisfactorily presents a related mitigation strategy.

- The CN appears as only partly cost efficient with limited value for money because it requires relatively high investment for the intended and insufficiently defined results and impacts in four regions of Italy (Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Trentino-Alto Adige, Emilia-Romagna).

2. Award criterion 2

- The CN contributes moderately to the objectives for the Environmental Governance and Information priority area as specified in Article 12 of the LIFE regulation. The quality of the CN's contribution is demonstrated because it is an acceptable set of information actions related to an assessment of water footprint in the drinking and agriculture sectors and dissemination of good practices. The project seems to comply with the selected project topics, namely: Raising awareness - Green Growth - Sustainable Consumption; and Raising awareness - Making it happen: Benefits of implementation of water legislation, because it foresees calculations and dissemination of data and information on water footprint and consolidation of the Water Framework Directive. However, full compliance with the project topic will only be assessed at stage 2 (full proposal) for the selected concept notes.

- The CN concretely addresses the GIE priority areas as stated in the LIFE regulation Annex III and in the LIFE multiannual work programme 2018-2020. The CN clearly presents some potential for contribution to the implementation of the Water Framework Directive through calculations and dissemination of water footprint for goods and services (e.g. wine production). However, the quality of the CN, related to the development and/or update of WFD or other related policies (e.g. water consumption in agriculture production, drinking water quality) is not fully demonstrated because it does not include clear efforts for specific legislative development during the project that will result in policy updates in Italy or EU level.

- The CN demonstrates some limited information impacts and some indirect environmental benefits, such as an "increase of 20% for the teachers and 30% of population - on a yearly base - is expected for the knowledge of the concept of WF". Additional expected impacts refer to 10 courses for 15 teachers each year, involvement of at least 2,000 students in the first year, at least 3,500 participants in conferences, workshops, public debates, etc. However, the awareness/behaviour change impacts are not fully defined or credible in the absence of a clear baseline and due to insufficiently quantified results.

- Sustainability seems partly convincing. The CN addresses technical and scientific developments on the "Water Footprint" of the water and agricultural sector to update best practices in integrated water resource management methodologies. It is planned to maintain coordination of the network of stakeholders (not defined yet), and include in the statute of the various consortia, the commitment to apply best practices deriving from the project. In schools, there should be continuity in updating the teachers and professors, and courses will be created for new teachers. However, school authorities are not suitably involved in the project. The CN does not provide a clear scheme to ensure financial sustainability of the proposed activities and most coordination is under the control of a private company that can continue and sustain the results only if specific financial resources are available.