

Noise - Annex III, section A, point (d)(ii)

Under this heading, priority will be given to projects in urban areas in order to improve the situation for a maximum number of persons.

1. Projects aimed at the introduction of permanent **noise Low Emission Zones (LEZ) schemes in urban areas**, by allowing only electrically powered vehicles or applying other equally effective noise LEZ approaches.
2. Projects **inside densely populated urban areas** aimed at reducing **noise from roads and other transport infrastructures** by means of using low noise surfaces having life cycle costs comparable to those of standard surfaces while achieving a substantial noise reduction.

Industrial accidents - Annex III, section A, point (e)(iii)

1. Projects aimed at facilitating the implementation of the **Seveso III Directive** (Directive 2012/18/EU) on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances through development of methodological tools for carrying out **risk mapping**, including environmental risk mapping, and for **addressing domino effects**.

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(e) Thematic priorities for Air quality and emissions, including urban environment: support activities for the implementation of the specific objectives for air and emissions in the Roadmap for a Resource-Efficient Europe and the 7th Environment Action Programme, in particular:

- (i) integrated approaches to the implementation of Air quality legislation;*
- (ii) support activities to facilitate compliance with Union air quality and related air emissions standards including Directive 2001/81/EC of the European Parliament and the Council¹⁷ (National Emissions Ceilings Directive);*
- (iii) support activities for the enhanced implementation of Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁸ (Industrial Emissions Directive) with a special emphasis on improving BAT definition and implementation process, ensuring easy public access to information and enhancing the contribution of the IED to innovation.*

The thematic priority “air quality and emissions including urban environment” focusses on the implementation of air quality legislation and a comprehensive approach to urban environmental problems. Air pollution remains the most serious environmental health problem in Europe, with a mortality rate more than ten times that from traffic accidents, and also having a significant impact on ecosystems (e.g. 70% of the EU's Natura 2000 sites suffer from eutrophication as a result of air pollution). It should be addressed in line with the forthcoming EU Air Quality Strategy for the period up to 2030.

¹⁷ Directive 2001/81/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 October 2001 on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants (OJ L 309, 27.11.2001, p. 22).

¹⁸ Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) (OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 17).

The Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) is a key instrument for pollution prevention and control from large point sources. Experience with implementation of the IED (and its predecessor IPPC) has allowed for identifying additional needs in terms of public information and the introduction of emerging techniques

Priority will be therefore given to the following projects:

Air quality legislation and the NEC Directive - Annex III, section A, points (e)(i)-(ii)

Where not explicitly stated otherwise, air quality projects should generally focus on urban areas in order to cover as many people as possible.

1. **Local and regional energy projects** addressing air quality and emission reductions in atmospheric particulate matter (PM) **hotspots** in areas with continued **high use of coal and biomass burning heating applications**.
2. Projects contributing to **high quality biomass burning** applications and their proper use, including in mountainous regions (such as using ultra low dust technologies, high efficiency and clean combustion and control technologies, heat storage).
3. **Sustainable mobility projects** for those components that are essential for meeting air quality standards focussing on cleaner real world driving, the use of electric or super low emission vehicles¹⁹ as referred to in the Horizon 2020 Working Program, the use of clean alternative fuels, innovative retrofit programmes for public service vehicles, alternative drive train technology like electro-mobility and hydrogen-based mobility, development and implementation of high-impact LEZ and road pricing schemes through advanced access criteria and consumer product labels²⁰ (Major Metropolitan Areas), and the use of innovative logistic platforms for last mile delivery of goods.
4. **Projects to reduce ammonia and PM emissions from agriculture** in support for the implementation of the upgraded UNECE Code of Good Practice for reducing ammonia and PM emissions from agriculture.

Industrial Emissions Directive - Annex III, section A, points (e)(iii)

1. Projects developing and testing **pollution prevention and abatement techniques** referred to in IED as emerging techniques.

Urban environment - Annex III, section A, point (e)

1. Projects implementing **integrated and comprehensive policies for sustainable urban planning and design** through innovative approaches regarding urban public transport and mobility, sustainable buildings, energy efficiency or urban biodiversity conservation.

3.2. PRIORITY AREA NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Pursuant to Article 11(a) of the LIFE Regulation, the project topics corresponding to this priority area and the related thematic priorities listed in Annex III to the LIFE Regulation, shall pursue in particular the specific objective “to contribute to the **development and implementation** of Union policy and legislation in the area of nature and biodiversity, including the Union Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, and Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC, in particular by **applying, developing, testing and demonstrating approaches, best practices and solutions**”. Projects in this priority area therefore can implement existing approaches, best

¹⁹ Super low emission vehicles within the meaning of the Horizon 2020 work programme.

²⁰ Products envisaged could be cars as well as motorised two-wheelers and three-wheelers.

practices and solutions or develop, test and demonstrate new approaches, best practices and solutions. With regard to projects falling within the thematic priority **biodiversity**, however, **priority will generally be given to pilot and demonstrative projects**, unless otherwise stated in the respective project topic.

LIFE has been a key tool supporting the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives during the past 20 years. This small programme has been instrumental and in some cases crucial to ensure the establishment of the Natura 2000 network. The co-legislators have expressed their clear wish to keep the focus of LIFE on this strategic issue, in particular at the time when all Member States are required to ensure the favourable conservation status of all habitats and species. In most cases, this can only be achieved by active management of the sites and their connectivity or that of the relevant species. For this reason LIFE Nature and Biodiversity will continue to focus its limited financial resources on Natura 2000 to ensure full delivery of the commitments concerning target 1 of the Biodiversity strategy. At the same time, following the positive experience of LIFE+, LIFE 2014-2020 will promote Biodiversity projects mostly aimed at testing and demonstrating new ways to address wider biodiversity concerns. LIFE Nature and LIFE Biodiversity are intended to complement each other.

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- (a) ***Thematic priorities for Nature: activities for the implementation of Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC, in particular:***
- (i) *Activities aimed at improving the conservation status of habitats and species, including marine habitats and species, and bird species, of Union interest;*
 - (ii) *Activities in support of the Natura 2000 network bio-geographical seminars;*
 - (iii) *Integrated approaches for the implementation of prioritised action frameworks.*

The following project topics contributing to Target 1 of the Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 to fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives are given priority:

1. Projects aimed at improving the conservation status of habitat types or species (including bird species) of Community Interest²¹, targeting the **Natura 2000 sites** proposed or designated for these habitat types or species.
2. Projects aimed at improving the conservation status of habitat types in Natura 2000 sites or species (including bird species) of Community Interest, provided, their **status is not “favourable/secure and not declining” or “unknown”** according to the most recent overall assessments that Member States have provided at the relevant geographic level according to Article 17 of the Habitats Directive or to the most recent assessments according to Article 12 Birds Directive and EU-level bird assessments.
3. Projects implementing one or several **actions** foreseen in the relevant **Prioritised Action Framework (PAF)**, as updated by the Member States or concrete actions identified, recommended or agreed in the framework of the Natura 2000 bio-geographical seminars.

²¹ The reference to the term "Community interest" used in this context is to be understood as "Union interest".