



## EUROPEAN RESEARCH EXECUTIVE AGENCY (REA)

REA.B – Green Europe

B.4 – Agri-Food promotion, Environmental Observation and Innovative Governance

### GRANT AGREEMENT

#### **Project 101182942 — FarmBioNet**

#### **PREAMBLE**

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

**on the one part,**

the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and**

**on the other part,**

1. 'the coordinator':

**TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC)**, PIC 999466952, established in Oak Park, CARLOW, Ireland,

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

2. **University of Forestry (UF)**, PIC 998170838, established in KLIMENT OCHRIDSKI BLVD 10, Sofia 1756, Bulgaria,

3. **EKOLOSKI INSTITUT ECOLOGICA \* Environmental Institute ECOLOGICA (ECOLOGICA)**, PIC 932919132, established in Zelenci dol 17, Zagreb 10000, Croatia,

4. **INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY OF THE SLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, public research institution (ILE SAS)**, PIC 999903937, established in Stefanikova 3, BRATISLAVA 814 99, Slovakia,

5. **STUDIA-Schlierbach Studienzentrum für internationale Analysen (STUDIA)**, PIC 948751860, established in Panoramaweg 1, Schlierbach 4553, Austria,

6. **TENUTA DI PAGANICO SOCIETA AGRICOLASPA (TDPA)**, PIC 905806371, established in VIA DELLA STAZIONE 10, CIVITELLA PAGANICO 58045, Italy,

7. **BIO AUSTRIA - VEREIN ZUR FORDERUNG DES BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAUS (BIO AUSTRIA)**, PIC 899879574, established in AUF DER GUGL 3/3, LINZ 4021, Austria,

8. **GOZDARSKI INSTITUT SLOVENIJE (SFI)**, PIC 997626765, established in VECNA POT 2, LJUBLJANA 1000, Slovenia,

9. **WOLFGANG SUSKE (SuskeConsulting)**, PIC 898820916, established in HOLLANDSTRASSE 20/11, VIENNA 1020, Austria,

10. **DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HERITAGE (DHLGH)**, PIC 928585269, established in CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN D01W6X0, Ireland,

11. **UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE (UNIFI)**, PIC 999895789, established in Piazza San Marco 4, Florence 50121, Italy,

12. **ASOCIACION AGRARIA JOVENES AGRICULTORES DE SEVILLA (ASAJA)**, PIC 921134117, established in AV. SAN FRANCISCO JAVIER 9 - TERCERA PLANTA, SEVILLA 41018, Spain,

13. **STICHTING AVALON FOUNDATION (AVALON)**, PIC 932502032, established in VAN BURMANIAWEI 8, IENS 8733 EP, Netherlands,

14. **FUNDATIA ADEPT TRANSILVANIA (ADEPT)**, PIC 951622575, established in STREET VIITORULUI NR.38 AP. LOT IV, SACELE 505600, Romania,

15. **UDRUZENJE ZA PREDUZETNISTVO I INOVACIJE FOODSCALE HUB (FSH)**, PIC 899388754, established in NARODNOG FRONTA 73, NOVI SAD 21000, Serbia,

16. **FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU DEUTSCHLAND EV (FIBLDE)**, PIC 970548439, established in KASSELER STRASSE 1a, FRANKFURT AM MAIN 60486, Germany,

17. **LEIBNIZ-ZENTRUM FUER AGRARLANDSCHAFTSFORSCHUNG (ZALF) e.V. (ZALF)**, PIC 999465885, established in Eberswalder Str. 84, MUENCHEBERG 15374, Germany,

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

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

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

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

The Agreement is composed of:

Preamble

Terms and Conditions (including Data Sheet)

- Annex 1 Description of the action<sup>1</sup>
- Annex 2 Estimated budget for the action
- Annex 3 Accession forms (if applicable)<sup>2</sup>
- Annex 3a Declaration on joint and several liability of affiliated entities (if applicable)<sup>3</sup>
- Annex 4 Model for the financial statements
- Annex 5 Specific rules (if applicable)

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<sup>1</sup> Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

<sup>2</sup> Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

<sup>3</sup> Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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## DATA SHEET

### 1. General data

Project summary:

Project summary
<p>The beneficial links between biodiversity and agriculture have not yet been adequately communicated to farmers and foresters, thereby creating reluctance in the uptake of biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices, including in Natura 2000 sites. FarmBioNet will address this knowledge gap in European farming and forestry. The FarmBioNet consortium combines the expertise of natural and social scientists, farmer organisations, SMEs, NGOs, businesses, and Ministries in 13 countries (11 member states). FarmBioNet will promote Europe-wide knowledge exchange and integration of research findings and practices related to farmland biodiversity, especially inside Natura 2000 sites, including those relevant to climate change mitigation/adaptation and soil health. It will evaluate and refine measures, and develop and use cross-sectoral approaches, to collect and distribute, at national and European level, easily accessible, practice-oriented, and context specific knowledge on BFF practices. Central to FarmBioNet is the establishment of Farming and Biodiversity National Networks (NNs), consisting of farmer/forester individuals and organisations, researchers, NGOs, advisors, and other relevant AKIS actors. FarmBioNet will use these NNs to gather and disseminate knowledge and information. NNs will use BFF case-study areas to promote exchange of traditional and evidence-based actions that benefit farm biodiversity, through a co-creation and cross-fertilisation process. Cost-benefit analyses, showing how biodiversity can benefit sustainable food production, and development of practical decision-making tools will promote biodiversity with farmers and foresters, and local, regional and national policy makers. FarmBioNet aims to position Europe as a global leader for biodiversity-friendly farmland management practices, harnessing knowledge to protect biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides, which are vital to sustainable land management and bring wider societal benefits.</p>

Keywords:

- Agrobiodiversity
- Biodiversity, farmers, thematic network, biodiversity-friendly practices, co-benefits, transfer of knowledge, multi-actor

Project number: 101182942

Project name: Farmer-focused Biodiversity and Agricultural Knowledge Network

Project acronym: FarmBioNet

Call: HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01

Topic: HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-11

Type of action: HORIZON Coordination and Support Actions

Granting authority: European Research Executive Agency

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

Project starting date: fixed date: 1 January 2025

Project end date: 31 December 2027

Project duration: 36 months

Consortium agreement: Yes

### 2. Participants

List of participants:

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Max grant amount
1	COO	TEAGASC	TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	IE	999466952	472 848.00
2	BEN	UF	University of Forestry	BG	998170838	55 250.00

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Max grant amount
3	BEN	ECOLOGICA	EKOLOSKI INSTITUT ECOLOGICA * Environmental Institute ECOLOGICA	HR	932919132	205 875.00
4	BEN	ILE SAS	INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY OF THE SLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, public research institution	SK	999903937	67 547.63
5	BEN	STUDIA	STUDIA-Schlierbach Studienzentrum für internationale Analysen	AT	948751860	155 235.50
6	BEN	TDPA	TENUTA DI PAGANICO SOCIETA AGRICOLASPA	IT	905806371	44 844.31
7	BEN	BIO AUSTRIA	BIO AUSTRIA - VEREIN ZUR FORDERUNG DES BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAUS	AT	899879574	135 613.50
8	BEN	SFI	GOZDARSKI INSTITUT SLOVENIJE	SI	997626765	99 233.25
9	BEN	SuskeConsulting	WOLFGANG SUSKE	AT	898820916	185 738.14
10	BEN	DHLGH	DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HERITAGE	IE	928585269	43 750.00
11	BEN	UNIFI	UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE	IT	999895789	164 068.75
12	BEN	ASAJA	ASOCIACION AGRARIA JOVENES AGRICULTORES DE SEVILLA	ES	921134117	120 403.38
13	BEN	AVALON	STICHTING AVALON FOUNDATION	NL	932502032	230 675.00
14	BEN	ADEPT	FUNDATIA ADEPT TRANSILVANIA	RO	951622575	125 915.00
15	BEN	FSH	UDRUZENJE ZA PREDUZETNISTVO I INOVACIJE FOODSCALE HUB	RS	899388754	303 743.76
16	BEN	FIBLDE	FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU DEUTSCHLAND EV	DE	970548439	119 762.50
17	BEN	ZALF	LEIBNIZ-ZENTRUM FUER AGRARLANDSCHAFTSFORSCHUNG (ZALF) e.V.	DE	999465885	183 250.00
18	AP	AGRIDEA	AGRIDEA	CH	999667451	0.00
19	AP	FIBLCH	FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU STIFTUNG	CH	998802114	0.00
<b>Total</b>						2 713 753.72

**Coordinator:**

- TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC)

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

Maximum grant amount (Annex 2)	Maximum grant amount (award decision)
2 713 753.72	2 713 753.72

**Grant form:** Lump Sum**Grant mode:** Action grant**Budget categories/activity types:** Lump sum contributions**Cost eligibility options:** n/a**Budget flexibility:** No**4. Reporting, payments and recoveries****4.1 Continuous reporting** (art 21)

**Deliverables:** see Funding & Tenders Portal Continuous Reporting tool

#### 4.2 Periodic reporting and payments

**Reporting and payment schedule** (art 21, 22):

Reporting					Payments	
Reporting periods			Type	Deadline	Type	Deadline (time to pay)
RP No	Month from	Month to				
					Initial prefinancing	30 days from entry into force/10 days before starting date – whichever is the latest
1	1	18	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period	Interim payment	90 days from receiving periodic report
2	19	36	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period	Final payment	90 days from receiving periodic report

**Prefinancing payments and guarantees:**

Prefinancing payment	
Type	Amount
Prefinancing 1 (initial)	2 170 999.78

**Reporting and payment modalities** (art 21, 22):

Mutual Insurance Mechanism (MIM): Yes

MIM contribution: 5% of the maximum grant amount (135 687.69), retained from the initial prefinancing

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

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

No-profit rule: n/a

Late payment interest: ECB + 3.5%

Bank account for payments:

IE91BOFI90097343178466

Conversion into euros: n/a

Reporting language: Language of the Agreement

**4.3 Certificates** (art 24): n/a

**4.4 Recoveries** (art 22)

**First-line liability for recoveries:**

Beneficiary termination: Beneficiary concerned

Final payment: Each beneficiary for their own debt

After final payment: Beneficiary concerned

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

Individual financial responsibility: Each beneficiary is liable only for its own debts (and those of its affiliated entities, if any)

Joint and several liability of affiliated entities — n/a

**5. Consequences of non-compliance, applicable law & dispute settlement forum**

**Suspension and termination:**

Additional suspension grounds (art 31)

Additional termination grounds (art 32)

**Applicable law (art 43):**

Standard applicable law regime: EU law + law of Belgium

**Dispute settlement forum (art 43):**

Standard dispute settlement forum:

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

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

**6. Other**

**Specific rules (Annex 5):** Yes

**Standard time-limits after project end:**

Confidentiality (for X years after final payment): 5

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

Reviews (up to X years after final payment): 2

Audits (up to X years after final payment): 2

Extension of findings from other grants to this grant (no later than X years after final payment): 2

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

## **CHAPTER 1 GENERAL**

### **ARTICLE 1 — SUBJECT OF THE AGREEMENT**

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

### **ARTICLE 2 — DEFINITIONS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Affiliated entities (AE)** — Entities affiliated to a beneficiary within the meaning of Article 187 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046<sup>4</sup> which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries (obligation to implement action tasks and right to charge costs and claim contributions).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Fraud** — Fraud within the meaning of Article 3 of EU Directive 2017/1371<sup>5</sup> and Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995<sup>6</sup>, as well as any other wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.

**Irregularities** — Any type of breach (regulatory or contractual) which could impact the EU financial interests, including irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation 2988/95<sup>7</sup>.

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

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

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

## **CHAPTER 2 ACTION**

### **ARTICLE 3 — ACTION**

The grant is awarded for the action **101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('action'), as described in Annex 1.

### **ARTICLE 4 — DURATION AND STARTING DATE**

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

## **CHAPTER 3 GRANT**

### **ARTICLE 5 — GRANT**

#### **5.1 Form of grant**

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

<sup>6</sup> OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

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

The grant is an action grant<sup>8</sup> which takes the form of a lump sum grant for the completion of work packages.

## 5.2 Maximum grant amount

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

## 5.3 Funding rate

Not applicable

## 5.4 Estimated budget, budget categories and forms of funding

The estimated budget for the action (lump sum breakdown) is set out in Annex 2.

It contains the estimated eligible contributions for the action (lump sum contributions), broken down by participant and work package.

Annex 2 also shows the types of contributions (forms of funding)<sup>9</sup> to be used for each work package.

## 5.5 Budget flexibility

Budget flexibility does not apply; changes to the estimated budget (lump sum breakdown) always require an amendment (see Article 39).

Amendments for transfers between *work packages* are moreover possible only if:

- the work packages concerned are not already completed (and declared in a financial statement) and
- the transfers are justified by the technical implementation of the action.

## ARTICLE 6 — ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS

### 6.1 and 6.2 General and specific eligibility conditions

Lump sum contributions are eligible ('eligible contributions'), if:

- (a) they are set out in Annex 2 and
- (b) the work packages are completed and the work is properly implemented by the beneficiaries and/or the results are achieved, in accordance with Annex 1 and during in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of work/results relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be achieved afterwards; see Article 21)

They will be calculated on the basis of the amounts set out in Annex 2.

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<sup>8</sup> For the definition, see Article 180(2)(a) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: '**action grant**' means an EU grant to finance "an action intended to help achieve a Union policy objective".

<sup>9</sup> See Article 125 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

### 6.3 Ineligible contributions

‘Ineligible contributions’ are:

- (a) lump sum contributions that do not comply with the conditions set out above (see Article 6.1 and 6.2)
- (b) lump sum contributions for activities already funded under other EU grants (or grants awarded by an EU Member State, non-EU country or other body implementing the EU budget), except for the following case:
  - (i) Synergy actions: not applicable
- (c) other:
  - (i) country restrictions for eligible costs: not applicable.

### 6.4 Consequences of non-compliance

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

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

## CHAPTER 4 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

### SECTION 1 CONSORTIUM: BENEFICIARIES, AFFILIATED ENTITIES AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS

#### **ARTICLE 7 — BENEFICIARIES**

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

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

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

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

The beneficiaries (and their action) must remain eligible under the EU programme funding the grant

for the entire duration of the action. Lump sum contributions will be eligible only as long as the beneficiary and the action are eligible.

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

(a) Each beneficiary must:

- (i) keep information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date (see Article 19)
- (ii) inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) immediately of any events or circumstances likely to affect significantly or delay the implementation of the action (see Article 19)
- (iii) submit to the coordinator in good time:
  - the prefinancing guarantees (if required; see Article 23)
  - the financial statements and certificates on the financial statements (CFS): not applicable
  - the contribution to the deliverables and technical reports (see Article 21)
  - any other documents or information required by the granting authority under the Agreement
- (iv) submit via the Portal data and information related to the participation of their affiliated entities.

(b) The coordinator must:

- (i) monitor that the action is implemented properly (see Article 11)
- (ii) act as the intermediary for all communications between the consortium and the granting authority, unless the Agreement or granting authority specifies otherwise, and in particular:
  - submit the prefinancing guarantees to the granting authority (if any)
  - request and review any documents or information required and verify their quality and completeness before passing them on to the granting authority
  - submit the deliverables and reports to the granting authority
  - inform the granting authority about the payments made to the other beneficiaries (report on the distribution of payments; if required, see Articles 22 and 32)
- (iii) distribute the payments received from the granting authority to the other beneficiaries without unjustified delay (see Article 22).

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

However, coordinators which are public bodies may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(ii) last

indent and (iii) above to entities with ‘authorisation to administer’ which they have created or which are controlled by or affiliated to them. In this case, the coordinator retains sole responsibility for the payments and for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Moreover, coordinators which are ‘sole beneficiaries’<sup>10</sup> (or similar, such as European research infrastructure consortia (ERICs)) may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(i) to (iii) above to one of their members. The coordinator retains sole responsibility for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

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

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

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

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

## ARTICLE 8 — AFFILIATED ENTITIES

Not applicable

## ARTICLE 9 — OTHER PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN THE ACTION

### 9.1 Associated partners

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

- **AGRIDEA (AGRIDEA)**, PIC 999667451, associated partner of TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC)
- **FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU STIFTUNG (FIBLCH)**, PIC 998802114, associated partner of FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU DEUTSCHLAND EV (FIBLDE)

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<sup>10</sup> For the definition, see Article 187(2) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: “Where several entities satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant and together form one entity, that entity may be treated as the **sole beneficiary**, including where it is specifically established for the purpose of implementing the action financed by the grant.”

Associated partners must implement the action tasks attributed to them in Annex 1 in accordance with Article 11. They may not charge contributions to the action (no lump sum contributions) and the costs for their tasks are not eligible (may not be included in the estimated budget in Annex 2).

The tasks must be set out in Annex 1.

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

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

## **9.2 Third parties giving in-kind contributions to the action**

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

Third parties giving in-kind contributions do not implement any action tasks. They may not charge contributions to the action (no lump sum contributions) and their costs are considered entirely covered by the lump sum contributions paid to the beneficiaries.

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

## **9.3 Subcontractors**

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

Subcontractors must implement their action tasks in accordance with Article 11. The beneficiaries' costs for subcontracting are considered entirely covered by the lump sum contributions for implementing the work packages (irrespective of the actual subcontracting costs incurred, if any).

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

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

## **9.4 Recipients of financial support to third parties**

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

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

## ARTICLE 10 — PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIAL STATUS

### 10.1 Non-EU participants

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

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: use qualified external auditors which are independent and comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC<sup>11</sup>
- for the controls under Article 25: allow for checks, reviews, audits and investigations (including on-the-spot checks, visits and inspections) by the bodies mentioned in that Article (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.).

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

### 10.2 Participants which are international organisations

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

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

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

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

### 10.3 Pillar-assessed participants

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

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<sup>11</sup> Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts or similar national regulations (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

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

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

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

and use the following specific rules, for:

- recoveries (Article 22): in case of financial support to third parties, there will be no recovery if the participant has done everything possible to retrieve the undue amounts from the third party receiving the support (including legal proceedings) and non-recovery is not due to an error or negligence on its part
- checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the EU (Article 25): will be conducted taking into account the rules and procedures specifically agreed between them and the framework agreement (if any)
- impact evaluation (Article 26): will be conducted in accordance with the participant’s internal rules and procedures and the framework agreement (if any)
- grant agreement suspension (Article 31): certain costs incurred during grant suspension are eligible (notably, minimum costs necessary for a possible resumption of the action and costs relating to contracts which were entered into before the pre-information letter was received and which could not reasonably be suspended, reallocated or terminated on legal grounds)
- grant agreement termination (Article 32): the final grant amount and final payment will be calculated taking into account also costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination takes effect, if the contract was entered into before the pre-information letter was received and could not reasonably be terminated on legal grounds
- liability for damages (Article 33.2): the granting authority must be compensated for damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement only if the damage is due to an

infringement of the participant's internal rules and procedures or due to a violation of third parties' rights by the participant or one of its employees or individual for whom the employees are responsible.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Participants must inform the coordinator without delay of any changes to the systems, rules and

procedures that were part of the pillar assessment. The coordinator must immediately inform the granting authority.

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

## **SECTION 2 RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION**

### **ARTICLE 11 — PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION**

#### **11.1 Obligation to properly implement the action**

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

#### **11.2 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

### **ARTICLE 12 — CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

#### **12.1 Conflict of interests**

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

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

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

#### **12.2 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

### **ARTICLE 13 — CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY**

#### **13.1 Sensitive information**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The confidentiality obligations no longer apply if:

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

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

### **13.2 Classified information**

The parties must handle classified information in accordance with the applicable EU, international or national law on classified information (in particular, Decision 2015/444<sup>12</sup> and its implementing rules).

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

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

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

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<sup>12</sup> Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

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

### **13.3 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

## **ARTICLE 14 — ETHICS AND VALUES**

### **14.1 Ethics**

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

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

### **14.2 Values**

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

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

### **14.3 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

## **ARTICLE 15 — DATA PROTECTION**

### **15.1 Data processing by the granting authority**

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

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission, an EU regulatory or executive agency, joint undertaking or other EU body, the processing will be subject to Regulation 2018/1725<sup>13</sup>.

### **15.2 Data processing by the beneficiaries**

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<sup>13</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

The beneficiaries must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/679<sup>14</sup>).

They must ensure that personal data is:

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

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

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

### **15.3 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

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

### **16.1 Background and access rights to background**

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

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

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

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<sup>14</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (‘GDPR’) (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1).

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

## 16.2 Ownership of results

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

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

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

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

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

- (a) **use for its own purposes** (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)
- (b) **distribution to the public** (in particular, publication as hard copies and in electronic or digital format, publication on the internet, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting by any channel, public display or presentation, communicating through press information services, or inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes)
- (c) **editing or redrafting** (including shortening, summarising, inserting other elements (e.g. meta-data, legends, other graphic, visual, audio or text elements), extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts, use in a compilation)
- (d) **translation**
- (e) **storage** in paper, electronic or other form
- (f) **archiving**, in line with applicable document-management rules
- (g) the right to authorise **third parties** to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties the modes of use set out in Points (b), (c), (d) and (f), if needed for the information, communication and publicity activity of the granting authority and
- (h) **processing**, analysing, aggregating the materials, documents and information received and **producing derivative works**.

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

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

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

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

#### **16.4 Specific rules on IPR, results and background**

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

#### **16.5 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

### **ARTICLE 17 — COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY**

#### **17.1 Communication — Dissemination — Promoting the action**

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

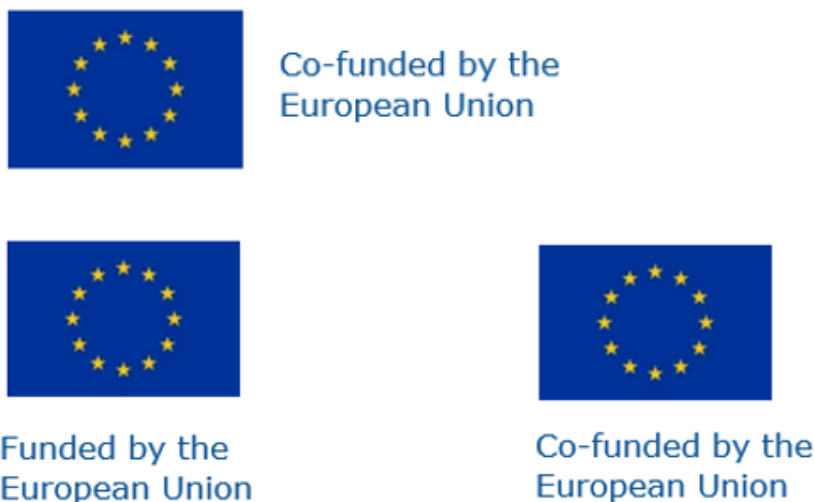
Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the granting authority.

#### **17.2 Visibility — European flag and funding statement**

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, communication activities of the beneficiaries related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by the grant must acknowledge the EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):



Funded by the  
European Union



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

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

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

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

### 17.3 Quality of information — Disclaimer

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

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

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

### 17.4 Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules

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

### 17.5 Consequences of non-compliance

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

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

## ARTICLE 18 — SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

## **18.1 Specific rules for carrying out the action**

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

## **18.2 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

# **SECTION 3 GRANT ADMINISTRATION**

## **ARTICLE 19 — GENERAL INFORMATION OBLIGATIONS**

### **19.1 Information requests**

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

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

### **19.2 Participant Register data updates**

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

### **19.3 Information about events and circumstances which impact the action**

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

- (a) **events** which are likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action or affect the EU's financial interests, in particular:
  - (i) changes in their legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour signed before grant signature)
  - (ii) linked action information: not applicable
- (b) **circumstances** affecting:
  - (i) the decision to award the grant or
  - (ii) compliance with requirements under the Agreement.

### **19.4 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

## **ARTICLE 20 — RECORD-KEEPING**

### **20.1 Keeping records and supporting documents**

The beneficiaries must — at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6) — keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the action (proper implementation of the work and/or achievement of the results as described in Annex 1) in line with the accepted standards in the respective field (if any); beneficiaries do not need to keep specific records on the actual costs incurred.

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

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

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

### **20.2 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

## **ARTICLE 21 — REPORTING**

### **21.1 Continuous reporting**

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

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

### **21.2 Periodic reporting: Technical reports and financial statements**

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

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

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

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

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

The financial part of the periodic report includes:

- the financial statement (consolidated statement for the consortium)
- the explanation on the use of resources (or detailed cost reporting table): not applicable
- the certificates on the financial statements (CFS): not applicable.

The **financial statement** must contain the lump sum contributions indicated in Annex 2, for the work packages that were completed during the reporting period.

For the last reporting period, the beneficiaries may exceptionally also declare partial lump sum contributions for work packages that were not completed (e.g. due to force majeure or technical impossibility).

Lump sum contributions which are not declared in a financial statement will not be taken into account by the granting authority.

By signing the financial statement (directly in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool), the coordinator confirms (on behalf of the consortium) that:

- the information provided is complete, reliable and true
- the lump sum contributions declared are eligible (in particular, the work packages have been completed, that the work has been properly implemented and/or the results were achieved in accordance with Annex 1; see Article 6)
- the proper implementation and/or achievement can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documents (see Article 20) that will be produced upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Article 25).

In case of recoveries (see Article 22), beneficiaries will be held responsible also for the lump sum contributions declared for their affiliated entities (if any).

### 21.3 Currency for financial statements and conversion into euros

The financial statements must be drafted in euro.

### 21.4 Reporting language

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

### **21.5 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

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

## **ARTICLE 22 — PAYMENTS AND RECOVERIES — CALCULATION OF AMOUNTS DUE**

### **22.1 Payments and payment arrangements**

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

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

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

The cost of payment transfers will be borne as follows:

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

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

### **22.2 Recoveries**

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

Each beneficiary's financial responsibility in case of recovery is in principle limited to their own debt and undue amounts of their affiliated entities.

In case of enforced recoveries (see Article 22.4), affiliated entities will be held liable for repaying debts of their beneficiaries, if required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4).

### **22.3 Amounts due**

#### **22.3.1 Prefinancing payments**

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

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

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

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

The contribution to the Mutual Insurance Mechanism will be retained from the prefinancing payments (at the rate and in accordance with the modalities set out in the Data Sheet, see Point 4.2) and transferred to the Mechanism.

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

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

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

### 22.3.2 Amount due at beneficiary termination — Recovery

In case of beneficiary termination, the granting authority will determine the provisional amount due for the beneficiary concerned.

This will be done on the basis of work packages already completed in previous interim payments. Payments for ongoing/not yet completed work packages which the beneficiary was working on before termination (if any) will therefore be made only later on, with the next interim or final payments when those work packages have been completed.

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

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

#### Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary, on the basis of the beneficiary's lump sum contributions for the work packages which were approved in previous interim payments.

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

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

{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary  
minus

{prefinancing and interim payments received (if any)}.

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

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

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

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

If payment is not made to the coordinator by the date specified in the confirmation letter, the granting authority may call on the Mutual Insurance Mechanism to intervene, if continuation of the action is guaranteed and the conditions set out in the rules governing the Mechanism are met.

In this case, it will send a **beneficiary recovery letter**, together with a **debit note** with the terms and date for payment.

The debit note for the beneficiary will include the amount calculated for the affiliated entities which also had to end their participation (if any).

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

### 22.3.3 Interim payments

Interim payments reimburse the eligible lump sum contributions claimed for work packages implemented during the reporting periods (if any).

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

Payment is subject to the approval of the periodic report and the work packages declared. Their approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of their content.

Incomplete work packages and work packages that have not been delivered or cannot be approved will be rejected (see Article 27).

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

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

#### Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘accepted EU contribution’ for the action for the reporting period, by calculating the lump sum contributions for the approved work packages.

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

#### Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

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

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

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

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

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

The final payment (payment of the balance) reimburses the remaining eligible lump sum contributions claimed for the implemented work packages (if any).

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

Payment is subject to the approval of the final periodic report and the work packages declared. Their approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of their content.

Work packages (or parts of them) that have not been delivered or cannot be approved will be rejected (see Article 27).

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

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

#### Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘accepted EU contribution’ for the action for all reporting periods, by calculating the lump sum contributions for the approved work packages.

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

#### Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

Not applicable

### Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

Not applicable

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

$$\begin{aligned} & \{\text{final grant amount} \\ & \text{minus} \\ & \{\text{prefinancing and interim payments made (if any)}\} \}. \end{aligned}$$

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

The amount retained for the Mutual Insurance Mechanism (see above) will be released and **paid** to the coordinator (in accordance with the rules governing the Mechanism).

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

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

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

If — despite the release of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism contribution — the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

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

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

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received) and the coordinator has submitted the report on the distribution of payments, it will calculate the **share of the debt per beneficiary**, by:

- (a) identifying the beneficiaries for which the amount calculated as follows is negative:

$$\begin{aligned} & \{ \{ \text{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary} \\ & \text{divided by} \\ & \text{total accepted EU contribution for the action} \} \\ & \text{multiplied by} \\ & \text{final grant amount for the action} \}, \end{aligned}$$

minus

{prefinancing and interim payments received by the beneficiary (if any)} }

and

(b) dividing the debt:

{amount calculated according to point (a) for the beneficiary concerned

divided by

the sum of the amounts calculated according to point (a) for all the beneficiaries identified according to point (a)}

multiplied by

the amount to be recovered}.

and confirm the amount to be recovered from each beneficiary concerned (**confirmation letter**), together with **debit notes** with the terms and date for payment.

The debit notes for beneficiaries will include the amounts calculated for their affiliated entities (if any).

If the coordinator has not submitted the report on the distribution of payments, the granting authority will **recover** the full amount from the coordinator (**confirmation letter** and **debit note** with the terms and date for payment).

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

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

If — after the final payment (in particular, after checks, reviews, audits or investigations; see Article 25) — the granting authority rejects lump sum contributions (see Article 27) or reduces the grant (see Article 28), it will calculate the **revised final grant amount** for the beneficiary concerned.

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

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

#### Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

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

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

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

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

$$\left\{ \frac{\text{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary}}{\text{divided by}} \right.$$

$$\left. \frac{\text{total accepted EU contribution for the action}}{\text{multiplied by}} \right.$$

$$\left. \text{final grant amount for the action} \right\}.$$

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

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

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

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

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

## 22.4 Enforced recovery

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

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

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

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

- (b) financial guarantee(s): not applicable
- (c) joint and several liability of beneficiaries: not applicable
- (d) by holding affiliated entities jointly and severally liable (if any, see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)
- (e) by taking legal action (see Article 43) or, provided that the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, by adopting an enforceable decision under Article 299 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 100(2) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

If the Mutual Insurance Mechanism was called on by the granting authority to intervene, recovery will be continued in the name of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism. If two debit notes were sent, the second one (in the name of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism) will be considered to replace the first one (in

the name of the granting authority). Where the MIM intervened, offsetting, enforceable decisions or any other of the above-mentioned forms of enforced recovery may be used *mutatis mutandis*.

The amount to be recovered will be increased by **late-payment interest** at the rate set out in Article 23.5, from the day following the payment date in the debit note, up to and including the date the full payment is received.

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

Bank charges incurred in the recovery process will be borne by the beneficiary, unless Directive 2015/2366<sup>15</sup> applies.

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

## 22.5 Consequences of non-compliance

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ARTICLE 23 — GUARANTEES

Not applicable

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<sup>15</sup> Directive (EU) 2015/2366 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on payment services in the internal market, amending Directives 2002/65/EC, 2009/110/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, and repealing Directive 2007/64/EC (OJ L 337, 23.12.2015, p. 35).

## ARTICLE 24 — CERTIFICATES

Not applicable

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

### 25.1 Granting authority checks, reviews and audits

#### 25.1.1 Internal checks

The granting authority may — during the action or afterwards — check the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement, including assessing lump sum contributions, deliverables and reports.

#### 25.1.2 Project reviews

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### 25.1.3 Audits

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **25.3 Access to records for assessing simplified forms of funding**

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

## **25.4 OLAF, EPPO and ECA audits and investigations**

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

- the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) under Regulations No 883/2013<sup>16</sup> and No 2185/96<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013

- the European Public Prosecutor’s Office (EPPO) under Regulation 2017/1939
- the European Court of Auditors (ECA) under Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 257 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

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

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

## **25.5 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations — Extension of findings**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **25.5.2 Extension from other grants**

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

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

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

<sup>17</sup> Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292, 15/11/1996, p. 2).

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

If the extension concerns **rejections of lump sum contributions**: the notification will include:

- (a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings
- (b) the request to submit revised financial statements for all grants affected
- (c) the correction rate for extrapolation, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors, to calculate the amounts to be rejected, if the beneficiary concerned:
  - (i) considers that the submission of revised financial statements is not possible or practicable or
  - (ii) does not submit revised financial statements.

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

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

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

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

## 25.6 Consequences of non-compliance

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

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

## ARTICLE 26 — IMPACT EVALUATIONS

### 26.1 Impact evaluation

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

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

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

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

## **26.2 Consequences of non-compliance**

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

# **CHAPTER 5 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE**

## **SECTION 1 REJECTIONS AND GRANT REDUCTION**

### **ARTICLE 27 — REJECTION OF CONTRIBUTIONS**

#### **27.1 Conditions**

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

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

Ineligible lump sum contributions will be rejected.

#### **27.2 Procedure**

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

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

#### **27.3 Effects**

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

### **ARTICLE 28 — GRANT REDUCTION**

#### **28.1 Conditions**

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

- (a) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:
  - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
  - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5).

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

## **28.2 Procedure**

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

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

## **28.3 Effects**

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

# **SECTION 2 SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION**

## **ARTICLE 29 — PAYMENT DEADLINE SUSPENSION**

### **29.1 Conditions**

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

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

(c) there are other issues affecting the EU financial interests.

## 29.2 Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

## ARTICLE 30 — PAYMENT SUSPENSION

### 30.1 Conditions

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

- (a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:
  - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
  - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5).

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

### 30.2 Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ARTICLE 31 — GRANT AGREEMENT SUSPENSION

### 31.1 Consortium-requested GA suspension

#### 31.1.1 Conditions and procedure

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

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

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

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

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

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Moreover, no work may be done. Ongoing work packages must be interrupted and no new work packages may be started.

## 31.2 EU-initiated GA suspension

### 31.2.1 Conditions

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

- (a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:
  - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
  - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5)
- (c) other:
  - (i) linked action issues: not applicable
  - (ii) the action has lost its scientific or technological relevance, for EIC Accelerator actions: the action has lost its economic relevance, for challenge-based EIC Pathfinder actions and Horizon Europe Missions: the action has lost its relevance as part of the Portfolio for which it has been initially selected

### 31.2.2 Procedure

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

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

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

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

Once the conditions for resuming implementation of the action are met, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator a **lifting of suspension letter**, in which it will set the suspension end date and invite the coordinator to request an amendment of the Agreement to set the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see

Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the lifting of suspension letter. This date may be before the date on which the letter is sent.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Moreover, no work may be done. Ongoing work packages must be interrupted and no new work packages may be started.

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

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

## ARTICLE 32 — GRANT AGREEMENT OR BENEFICIARY TERMINATION

### 32.1 Consortium-requested GA termination

#### 32.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the termination of the grant.

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

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

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

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

#### 32.1.2 Effects

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

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the lump sum contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Partial lump sum contributions for work packages that were not completed (e.g. due to technical reasons) may exceptionally be taken into account.

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

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

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

## 32.2 Consortium-requested beneficiary termination

### 32.2.1 Conditions and procedure

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

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

- the reasons why
- the opinion of the beneficiary concerned (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing)
- the date the beneficiary ends work on the action ('end of work date')
- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

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

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

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

### 32.2.2 Effects

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

- (i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned
- (ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work
- (iii) a second **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with other amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the reports submitted in previous interim payments (i.e. beneficiary's lump sum contributions for completed and approved work packages).

Lump sum contributions for ongoing/not yet completed work packages will have to be included in the periodic report for the next reporting periods when those work packages have been completed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **32.3 EU-initiated GA or beneficiary termination**

#### **32.3.1 Conditions**

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

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

- (i) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) was created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin (or created another entity with this purpose)
- (j) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:
  - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
  - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.)
- (k) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5)
- (l) despite a specific request by the granting authority, a beneficiary does not request — through the coordinator — an amendment to the Agreement to end the participation of one of its affiliated entities or associated partners that is in one of the situations under points (d), (f), (e), (g), (h), (i) or (j) and to reallocate its tasks, or
- (m) other:
  - (i) linked action issues: not applicable
  - (ii) the action has lost its scientific or technological relevance, for EIC Accelerator actions: the action has lost its economic relevance, for challenge-based EIC Pathfinder actions and Horizon Europe Missions: the action has lost its relevance as part of the Portfolio for which it has been initially selected

### 32.3.2 Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

### 32.3.3 Effects

#### (a) for **GA termination**:

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

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the lump sum contributions for activities implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Partial lump sum contributions for work packages that were not completed (e.g. due to technical reasons) may exceptionally be taken into account.

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

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

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

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

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

#### (b) for **beneficiary termination**:

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

- (i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned
- (ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work
- (iii) a **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with any amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the reports submitted in previous interim payments (i.e. beneficiary’s lump sum contributions for completed and approved work packages).

Lump sum contributions for ongoing/not yet completed work packages will have to be included

in the periodic report for the next reporting periods when those work packages have been completed.

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

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

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

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

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

## **SECTION 3 OTHER CONSEQUENCES: DAMAGES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS**

### **ARTICLE 33 — DAMAGES**

#### **33.1 Liability of the granting authority**

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

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

#### **33.2 Liability of the beneficiaries**

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

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

### **ARTICLE 34 — ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES**

Nothing in this Agreement may be construed as preventing the adoption of administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion from EU award procedures and/or financial penalties) or other public law measures, in addition or as an alternative to the contractual measures provided under this Agreement (see,

for instance, Articles 135 to 145 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046 and Articles 4 and 7 of Regulation 2988/95<sup>18</sup>).

## **SECTION 4 FORCE MAJEURE**

### **ARTICLE 35 — FORCE MAJEURE**

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

‘Force majeure’ means any situation or event that:

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

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

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

## **CHAPTER 6 FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **ARTICLE 36 — COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES**

#### **36.1 Forms and means of communication — Electronic management**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **36.2 Date of communication**

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

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

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

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

### **36.3 Addresses for communication**

The Portal can be accessed via the Europa website.

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

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

## **ARTICLE 37 — INTERPRETATION OF THE AGREEMENT**

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

Annex 5 takes precedence over the Terms and Conditions.

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

Annex 2 takes precedence over Annex 1.

## **ARTICLE 38 — CALCULATION OF PERIODS AND DEADLINES**

In accordance with Regulation No 1182/71<sup>19</sup>, periods expressed in days, months or years are calculated from the moment the triggering event occurs.

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

‘Days’ means calendar days, not working days.

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<sup>19</sup> Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1182/71 of the Council of 3 June 1971 determining the rules applicable to periods, dates and time-limits (OJ L 124, 8/6/1971, p. 1).

## ARTICLE 39 — AMENDMENTS

### 39.1 Conditions

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

Amendments may be requested by any of the parties.

### 39.2 Procedure

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

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

The request for amendment must include:

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

The granting authority may request additional information.

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

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

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

## ARTICLE 40 — ACCESSION AND ADDITION OF NEW BENEFICIARIES

### 40.1 Accession of the beneficiaries mentioned in the Preamble

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

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

If a beneficiary does not accede to the grant within the above deadline, the coordinator must — within

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

## **40.2 Addition of new beneficiaries**

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

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

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

Additions are also possible in mono-beneficiary grants.

## **ARTICLE 41 — TRANSFER OF THE AGREEMENT**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **ARTICLE 43 — APPLICABLE LAW AND SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES**

### **43.1 Applicable law**

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

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

### **43.2 Dispute settlement**

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

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

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

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

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

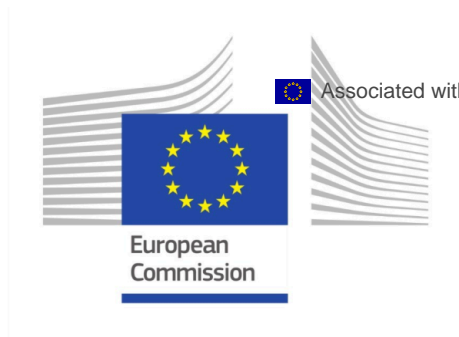
## **ARTICLE 44 — ENTRY INTO FORCE**

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

### **SIGNATURES**

For the coordinator

For the granting authority



## **ANNEX 1**



# **Horizon Europe (HORIZON)**

## **Description of the action (DoA)**

**Part A**

**Part B**

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION (PART A)

### COVER PAGE

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

<b>PROJECT</b>	
<i>Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Enter the info.</i>	
<b>Project number:</b>	101182942
<b>Project name:</b>	Farmer-focused Biodiversity and Agricultural Knowledge Network
<b>Project acronym:</b>	FarmBioNet
<b>Call:</b>	HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01
<b>Topic:</b>	HORIZON-CL6-2024-GOVERNANCE-01-11
<b>Type of action:</b>	HORIZON-CSA
<b>Service:</b>	REA/B/04
<b>Project starting date:</b>	fixed date: 1 January 2025
<b>Project duration:</b>	36 months

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

### Project summary

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

*Use the project summary from your proposal.*

The beneficial links between biodiversity and agriculture have not yet been adequately communicated to farmers and foresters, thereby creating reluctance in the uptake of biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices, including in Natura 2000 sites. FarmBioNet will address this knowledge gap in European farming and forestry. The FarmBioNet consortium combines the expertise of natural and social scientists, farmer organisations, SMEs, NGOs, businesses, and Ministries in 13 countries (11 member states). FarmBioNet will promote Europe-wide knowledge exchange and integration of research findings and practices related to farmland biodiversity, especially inside Natura 2000 sites, including those relevant to climate change mitigation/adaptation and soil health. It will evaluate and refine measures, and develop and use cross-sectoral approaches, to collect and distribute, at national and European level, easily accessible, practice-oriented, and context specific knowledge on BFF practices. Central to FarmBioNet is the establishment of Farming and Biodiversity National Networks (NNs), consisting of farmer/forester individuals and organisations, researchers, NGOs, advisors, and other relevant AKIS actors. FarmBioNet will use these NNs to gather and disseminate knowledge and information. NNs will use BFF case-study areas to promote exchange of traditional and evidence-based actions that benefit farm biodiversity, through a co-creation and cross-fertilisation process. Cost-benefit analyses, showing how biodiversity can benefit sustainable food production, and development of practical decision-making tools will promote biodiversity with farmers and foresters, and local, regional and national policy makers. FarmBioNet aims to position Europe as a global leader for biodiversity-friendly farmland management practices, harnessing knowledge to protect biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides, which are vital to sustainable land management and bring wider societal benefits.

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### PARTICIPANTS

*Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.*

Number	Role	Short name	Legal name	Country	PIC
1	COO	TEAGASC	TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	IE	999466952
2	BEN	UF	University of Forestry	BG	998170838
3	BEN	ECOLOGICA	EKOLOSKI INSTITUT ECOLOGICA * Environmental Institute ECOLOGICA	HR	932919132
4	BEN	ILE SAS	INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY OF THE SLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, public research institution	SK	999903937
5	BEN	STUDIA	STUDIA-Schlierbach Studienzentrum für internationale Analysen	AT	948751860
6	BEN	TDPA	TENUTA DI PAGANICO SOCIETA AGRICOLASPA	IT	905806371
7	BEN	BIO AUSTRIA	BIO AUSTRIA - VEREIN ZUR FORDERUNG DES BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAUS	AT	899879574
8	BEN	SFI	GOZDARSKI INSTITUT SLOVENIJE	SI	997626765
9	BEN	SuskeConsulting	WOLFGANG SUSKE	AT	898820916

**PARTICIPANTS***Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.*

Number	Role	Short name	Legal name	Country	PIC
10	BEN	DHLGH	DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HERITAGE	IE	928585269
11	BEN	UNIFI	UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE	IT	999895789
12	BEN	ASAJA	ASOCIACION AGRARIA JOVENES AGRICULTORES DE SEVILLA	ES	921134117
13	BEN	AVALON	STICHTING AVALON FOUNDATION	NL	932502032
14	BEN	ADEPT	FUNDATIA ADEPT TRANSILVANIA	RO	951622575
15	BEN	FSH	UDRUZENJE ZA PREDUZETNISTVO I INOVACIJE FOODSCALE HUB	RS	899388754
16	BEN	FIBLDE	FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU DEUTSCHLAND EV	DE	970548439
17	BEN	ZALF	LEIBNIZ-ZENTRUM FUER AGRARLANDSCHAFTSFORSCHUNG (ZALF) e.V.	DE	999465885
18	AP	AGRIDEA	AGRIDEA	CH	999667451
19	AP	FIBLCH	FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU STIFTUNG	CH	998802114

## LIST OF WORK PACKAGES

<b>Work packages</b>						
<i>Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.</i>						
<b>Work Package No</b>	<b>Work Package name</b>	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	<b>Effort (Person-Months)</b>	<b>Start Month</b>	<b>End Month</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
WP1	Analysis of the state of current biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices	1 - TEAGASC	15.60	1	13	D1.1 – Report on Current BFF practices D1.2 – Report on BFF incentives for farmers & foresters and their uptake D1.3 – Report on Farming in Natura 2000 network
WP2	Collection of research findings and best practices	17 - ZALF	14.60	1	18	D2.1 – Inter- & transdisciplinary methodological framework for addressing BFF D2.2 – Farm-specific knowledge gaps & needs of farmers & advisors D2.3 – Best practices & research findings related to knowledge gaps & responding to farmers' & advisors' needs
WP3	Networking and knowledge exchange – first phase	9 - SuskeConsulting	73.45	4	18	D3.1 – Database of FaB NN members
WP4	Networking and knowledge exchange – second phase	9 - SuskeConsulting	68.30	19	34	D4.1 – Implemented activities of NNs. D4.2 – Training materials to support stakeholders to create new BFF-orientated OGs
WP5	Development of BFF decision-making toolbox	5 - STUDIA	20.30	16	34	D5.1 – An online tool (Navigator) providing an overview public & private BFF incentives D5.2 – A cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices to include economic & non-economic factors D5.3 – A searchable database (Calculator)

<b>Work packages</b>						
<i>Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.</i>						
<b>Work Package No</b>	<b>Work Package name</b>	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	<b>Effort (Person-Months)</b>	<b>Start Month</b>	<b>End Month</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
						providing a cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices
WP6	Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication – first phase	15 - FSH	41.70	1	18	D6.1 – DEC Plan D6.2 – Dissemination & communication activities report including best practices (batch 1) D6.3 – Training Manual for NN leaders D6.4 – Data Management Plan
WP7	Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication - second phase	15 - FSH	38.40	19	36	D7.1 – Dissemination & Communication activities report including best practices (batch 2) D7.2 – Exploitation, IPR & Sustainability Report
WP8	Coordinating, networking, and data management – first phase	1 - TEAGASC	31.10	1	18	D8.1 – Project Handbook - Phase 1 D8.2 – First consortium meeting minutes
WP9	Coordinating, networking, and data management – second phase	1 - TEAGASC	31.40	19	36	D9.1 – Updated project handbook D9.2 – Consortium meeting minutes D9.3 – Policy recommendations
WP10	Ethics requirements	1 - TEAGASC	0.00	1	36	D10.1 – OEI - Requirement No. 1 D10.2 – OEI - Requirement No. 2 D10.3 – OEI - Requirement No. 3

## Work package WP1 – Analysis of the state of current biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Analysis of the state of current biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices		
<b>Start Month</b>	1	<b>End Month</b>	13

<b>Objectives</b>
To comprehensively review current BFF practices and incentives, including in Natura 2000 sites, and identify links between BFF practices and farm climate adaptation and mitigation measures. Review current and past incentives for farmers and foresters to improve biodiversity on the farm, and the barriers, enablers, opportunities and constraints for biodiversity protection in Natura 2000 agricultural areas.

<b>Description</b>
<p>Task 1.1 Review of current biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices (M1-M4, Lead: TEAGASC; Co-lead: ZALF; Contributing: UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, SFI, SUSKE, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, BIOAT) We will systematically review the literature and collect data from 12 NNs (to be established under WP3) to evaluate BFF practices and their potential benefit for biodiversity, ease of implementation from the farmer’s perspective, farmer uptake, co-benefits relating to farm climate adaptation and mitigation, and to improve farm sustainability and reduced farm input costs. We will categorise the practices (e.g. high; medium; low) in terms of these and other criteria (e.g. costs and lag time before visible benefits) to aid farmer decision-making and help understand why some actions are preferred over others, contributing to T5.3.</p> <p>Task 1.2 Review of BFF incentives for farmers (M3-M13, Lead: ZALF; Co-lead: DHLGH; Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, SFI, SUSKE, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, DHLGH) Research will be based on a review of existing European policies that incentivise farmers to implement BFF management practices on the farm. These will include initiatives under the new CAP Strategic Plans and will reflect the EU Biodiversity and Farm to Fork Strategies and the EU Pollinator Initiative. A review of the Agri-Environment Schemes and Agri-Environment Climate Measures, for the 12 partner countries leading a national network will be conducted. The review will highlight the coherence/incoherence of the incentives from the farmer’s perspective and other relevant stakeholders (policy makers, farm advisors, etc.) and the benefits of these incentives to biodiversity. Incentives will be cross-referenced against BFF practices and their categorisation from T1.1 to determine if some practices are better incentivised over others, and why (e.g. cheaper, easier to implement, higher benefits, etc.). This task will also identify how these incentives could be better communicated and structured to increase uptake.</p> <p>Task 1.3 Farming in Natura 2000 sites (M3-M10, Lead: TEAGASC; Co-lead: DHLGH; Contributing: UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, SFI, SUSKE, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, DHLGH) Requirements related to farming within Natura 2000 sites will be reviewed, including prohibited or obligatory management practices, available Natura payments, and the associated conditions, if any. We will present 12 inspirational case studies focusing on farmers’ perspectives of managing agricultural and/or forested land within Natura 2000 sites. The benefits towards biodiversity and the farmer will be reviewed, generating recommendations for extrapolation of results across the wider Natura 2000 network. Reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive will be used to identify protected habitats/species in key agricultural areas, and those for which agriculture is identified as a threat/pressure. This information will help identify practical conservation actions farmers can take for the benefit of particular habitats/species (using data from T1.1) and highlight where incentives exist or are lacking (drawing on T1.2), and how these might be tailored to farmers' needs to improve the conservation status of Annex habitats/species.</p>

## Work package WP2 – Collection of research findings and best practices

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	17 - ZALF
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Collection of research findings and best practices		
<b>Start Month</b>	1	<b>End Month</b>	18

Objectives
To develop an innovative, transdisciplinary methodological framework for identifying farmers' needs and knowledge gaps in implementing BFF practices and collecting existing best practices on BFF that may respond to farmers' needs and knowledge gaps. We will account for farm and landscape characteristics and the social network they are embedded in.
Description
<p>Description of work</p> <p>Task 2.1 Developing a methodological framework (M1-M4, lead ZALF, co-lead UNIFI; Contributing: TEAGASC)  A set of procedures will be defined for guiding the research process in a systematic and structured manner. We will define how data are collected and analysed, and which lessons can be drawn from the research. Making use of the inter- and transdisciplinary consortium, FarmBioNet will apply quantitative and qualitative research methods to address BFF practices from different perspectives, epistemologies, and assumptions. An online, structured interview will be conducted among all project partners to understand how each defines how the adoption of BFF practices can be supported through our individual work approach. The breadth of perspectives thus gathered will inform how to implement and communicate selected best practices (T2.2) and how we identify farm-specific knowledge gaps and needs (T2.3). The process of developing and reporting on the methodological framework will provide a scientific context that will be used in WP1.</p> <p>Task 2.2 Implementation and communication of selected best practices (M5-M18, Lead: ZALF, Co-lead UNIFI; Contributing: TEAGASC, ECO, BIOAT, SFI, AGRIDEA, DHLGH, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT)  Based on the literature and policy review in T1.1 and T1.2 as well as on the methodological framework in T2.1 we will validate the process of implementation of identified best practices relevant to the regions covered in the NN in practice. We will directly contact researchers or practitioners active in completed and ongoing projects that have or are focusing on BFF practices to account for their findings. Results from group interviews conducted T3.2 will be passed on to T2.3 to identify farm-specific knowledge gaps and needs. Together with the results from T2.3 they will be communicated through diverse platforms (T6.2 and 7.1) and will liaise and cooperate with existing biodiversity themed Operational Groups (OGs) thus feeding into T3.4. We will increase awareness and capacity building for consortium partners, to propose and create new OGs. A training concept targeted at innovation brokers and facilitators of participatory and knowledge-sharing activities in the EIP-AGRI context will also be developed.</p> <p>Task 2.3 Identify the knowledge gaps and needs of farmers and advisors (M8-M15, Lead: TEAGASC; Co-lead STUDIA; Contributing: UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, BIOAT, SFI, SUSKE, AGRIDEA, DHLGH, AVALON, ADEPT, ZALF, FIBLDE)  A comprehensive and cross-cultural quantitative farmer survey will be prepared to identify knowledge gaps of farmers and advisors and farm-specific needs to adopt BFF practices, (identified in T1.1 and T1.2). The survey will be shared throughout, and beyond all NNs. Survey design will be based on the findings of T2.1 and aims to reach 30 farmers, 10 advisors, and other AKIS actors in each NN country and will be translated into native languages with a focus on the country-specific BFF practices. The survey will address the heterogeneity of farmers regarding a) the potential adoption requirements of BFF practices; b) agronomic, social-ecological and economic farm characteristics, c) farmers' expectations from policy, markets, societal norms, and climate, and d) the social network of farmers (i.e. information sources). Results will be fed back to T2.2 providing information on farm-specific knowledge gaps and needs for the selected BFF practices.</p>

### Work package WP3 – Networking and knowledge exchange – first phase

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP3	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	9 - SuskeConsulting
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Networking and knowledge exchange – first phase		
<b>Start Month</b>	4	<b>End Month</b>	18

Objectives
To establish 12 Farming and Biodiversity National Networks (FaB NNs) and set up an EU thematic network. To provide trainings for network members. To organise national and international knowledge-sharing events. To establish cooperation with EIP OGs.
Description

**Task 3.1 Establishing 12 Farming and Biodiversity National Networks and setting up an EU thematic network (M4-M10, Lead: ADEPT; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ILESAS, BIOAT, SFI, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, FIBLDE)**

Setting up Farming and Biodiversity NNs (FaB NNs): The leaders, one in each country, of FaB NNs will identify national actors relevant for the thematic networks (including OGs, where they exist), contact and invite them to become part of the FaB NNs. The expected tasks and approximate time commitments required from FaB NN members during the project, the goals of the network and benefits of membership will be made clear to members to motivate suitable potential members to participate. Organising kick off meetings of FaB NNs in each of the project countries: objective of the kick off meetings is to inform members of FaB NN about project goals, planned activities and their roles. These meetings will allow the FaB NN organisers in each country to gather initial information concerning BFF practices in the specific countries. In response to national requirements and suitability, sub-networks may be established under a FaB NN covering a region, language or production system. Creating a database of all members of FaB NNs in each country. Keeping regular contacts with FaB NN members: for example, through a quarterly project newsletter for all persons included in the project to distribute information about current and planned project activities, findings and results.

**Task 3.2 Knowledge exchange, learning, and co-creation (M6-M18, Lead: SUSKE; Co-lead: ADEPT; Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, SFI, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, FIBLDE)** Organise capacity-building sessions for project partners to help them develop skills in leading the NNs, development of content and materials, including the art of interviewing, video creation, dealing with media and hot topics/controversies, etc. (implemented by FSH). At least 2 sessions per year will be organised partly on-line and partly in person (in parallel to project team meetings). In each country, organise 2 workshops collecting best practices and innovations, validating research and best practices from WP1 and WP2. Information gathered from farmers will be fed back to T1.1, T1.2 and T2.3. In each NN, coordinate/participate in 3 BFF related events. Each NN will make its own annual plan for these events, e.g. fairs, farming for nature events, etc. Synergies will be created with ongoing BFF farming projects and initiatives, including other EC-funded Horizon and LIFE projects and OGs. Organise 2 on-farm national exchange visit per year to demonstrate and disseminate best practices and encourage peer-to-peer learning.

**Task 3.3 EU knowledge sharing events and cross-fertilisation M6-M18, Lead: ECO; CO-lead: TEAGASC; Contributing: UFBG, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, SFI, SUSKE, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, FIBLDE)**

Organise 1 on-farm exchange visit between NN to demonstrate and disseminate best practices and encourage peer-to-peer learning. Farmers will be paired from different regions to foster cross-regional collaboration and exchange, provide information and show examples of BFF practices including relevant technologies.

**Task 3.4 Exchange and support to EIP Operational Groups (M6-M18, Lead: SFI, Co-lead: STUDIA; Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, FIBLDE)**

Liaise and cooperate with existing biodiversity-orientated OGs and involve them in FaB NN activities (covering travel costs and food from FaB NN budgets).

## Work package WP4 – Networking and knowledge exchange – second phase

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP4	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	9 - SuskeConsulting
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Networking and knowledge exchange – second phase		
<b>Start Month</b>	19	<b>End Month</b>	34

### Objectives

To provide trainings for network members. To organise national and international knowledge-sharing events. To continually cooperate with EIP OGs.

### Description

#### Description of work

**Task 4.1 Knowledge exchange, learning, and co-creation (M19-M34, Lead: SUSKE; Co-lead: ADEPT; Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, SFI, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, FIBLDE)**

Organise regular capacity building for project partners to develop skills in leading the NNs, development of content and materials, including the art of interviewing, video creation, dealing with media and hot topics/controversies, etc. These activities will be organised partly on-line and partly in person (in parallel to project team meetings). In each country,

organise 2 NN workshops during this period, collecting best practices and innovations, validating collected research and best practices from WP1 and WP2. Information gathered from farmers will be fed back to T1.1, T1.2 and T2.3. In each country, coordinate/participate in 3 BFF related events. Each NN will make its own annual plan for these events, e.g. fairs, conferences. Synergies will be created with ongoing BFF farming projects and initiatives, including EC-funded Horizon, LIFE projects and OGs. Organise 2 on-farm national exchange visit per year to demonstrate and disseminate best practices and encourage peer-to-peer learning.

Task 4.2 EU knowledge sharing events and cross-fertilisation (M19-M34, Lead: ECO, Co-lead: TEAGASC; Contributing: UFBG, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, SFI, SUSKE, AGRIDEA, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, FIBLDE) Organise 1 on-farm exchange visit between project countries to demonstrate and disseminate best practices and encourage peer-to-peer learning. The exchange visits will be organised in a geographically balanced way. Farmers will be paired from different regions to foster cross-regional collaboration and exchange, provide information and show examples of BFF techniques including relevant state-of-art technologies. Impacts of biodiversity loss and soil degradation due to intensive farming practices, climate change impacts on agricultural and forestry production and provide examples of farmers/foresters who successfully work on these challenges, will be presented and discussed. Organise final project event.

Task 4.3 Exchange and support to EIP Operational Groups (M19-M34, Lead: SFI; Co-lead: STUDIA; Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, FIBLDE) Liaise and cooperate with existing biodiversity-orientated OGs and involve them in FaB NN activities. Develop and conduct a capacity building and training programme to support stakeholders to propose and create new BFF-orientated OGs in the EIP-AGRI context (1 workshop per NN country).

### Work package WP5 – Development of BFF decision-making toolbox

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP5	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	5 - STUDIA
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Development of BFF decision-making toolbox		
<b>Start Month</b>	16	<b>End Month</b>	34

**Objectives**

To provide farmers/foresters with a practical and attractive toolbox to ease their decision-making and stimulate them to adopt, maintain or/and expand BFF. The specific objectives are to (i) Make available an online tool (Navigator) providing an overview of the available BFF incentives and (ii) Create a cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices, resulting in an online tool (Calculator).

**Description**

Description of work

Task 5.1 Creation of BFF incentives Navigator (M16-M34, Lead: AVALON; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: TEAGASC, FSH, STUDIA, ZALF)

Based on the findings of T1.1 and feedback received from T3.2 and T4.1, FarmBioNet will develop and make available a user-friendly online resource for farmers/foresters seeking information on available incentives for BFF practices. The tool (a BFF incentives Navigator) will provide a comprehensive overview of public and private incentives for BFF in the 12 NN in the national language. It will be a searchable database organised by NN, type of agriculture production, type of BFF measure, and funding source (public or private). For each incentive, the Navigator will provide detailed information about the name and type of the incentive, eligibility criteria, description of management prescriptions and administrative requirements, and level of support payments, as well as links to relevant supporting stakeholders. Interactive features will be used to present the relevant information on maps, graphs, or charts.

Task 5.2 Multi-factor cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices (M13-M19, Lead: STUDIA; Co-lead: AVALON Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, SFI, SUSKE, AGRIDEA, DHLGH, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, FIBLCH, ADEPT, FIBLDE, ZALF)

After having developed a methodology, a multi-factor cost-benefit analysis of BFF, accounting for both economic and non-economic factors will be undertaken. It will provide valuable insights for decision-making for farmers/foresters seeking information about the economic consequences of BFF and helping to evaluate trade-offs and identify possible win-win BFF strategies. Data needed for this analysis will be collected in all project countries – by consulting relevant national databases and contacting advisory services, farmer organisations, OGs, etc. The final selection of BFF practices

to be analysed (minimum 10) will depend on the availability of data and information about their uptake and popularity by farmers/foresters. The economic factors to be included will embrace the impact of BFF on changes in yields, input costs, labour costs, and opportunity costs. Non-economic factors will consider the (i) negative effects of BFF practices on production and dis-services for farmers, and (ii) benefits of ecosystem services provided to farmers/foresters and society, including the impact on social cohesion and rural fabric. Feedback on its findings will be sought from farmers/foresters and farm advisors at the events to be organised in WP 3 and WP4.

Task 5.3 Cost-benefit Calculator (M20-M34, Lead: STUDIA; Co-lead: AVALON; Contributing: TEAGASC, UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, TPA, BIOAT, SFI, UNIFI, ASAJA, AVALON, ADEPT, FIBLDE)

Based on the work undertaken in T5.1, a cost-benefit online decision support tool (a BFF practices Calculator) will be developed and made available for farmers/foresters seeking information on the profitability of BFF practices. It will be a searchable database organised by country and type of BFF practice, provided for all 12 NN countries, and made available in the national languages. Both the Navigator and Calculator will be created in an attractive, easy-to-understand format using clear and concise language understandable to farmers/foresters and optimised for mobile devices. Both will have a user-friendly interface that guides users through the input process and presents the results clearly and intuitively, using interactive elements such as dropdown menus, sliders, and input fields to allow users to input relevant data and parameters. Both tools will have links to relevant publications, guides, case studies, etc. They will also feature a feedback mechanism enabling users to provide feedback, suggest updates, or ask questions, suggest updates, or ask questions. Tools will be finalised in M8 and tested with end-users until M33.

## Work package WP6 – Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication – first phase

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP6	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication – first phase		
<b>Start Month</b>	1	<b>End Month</b>	18

### Objectives

To develop, implement and produce a comprehensive Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication (DEC) plan, and a range of communication and dissemination activities. To also provide support and build upon the skills of the Thematic network members for the successful implementation of activities.

### Description

T6.1: Development of Dissemination, Communication and Exploitation Plan (M1-M3, Lead: FSH, Co-lead: TEAGASC; Contributing: All partners)

This task will establish an integrated DEC plan, delivered within M3 and developed as outlined in section 2.2. The DEC plan will have a two-tier structure: (i) transitional DEC activities considering the whole projects network and (ii) DEC activities adapted to local realities and specificities for each of the partner countries/regions. The plan will be subject to a midterm revision to fine tune the DEC objectives with project results and include potential new communication tools and strategies that may appear over time.

T6.2: Communication and Dissemination activities. (M1-M18, Lead: FSH; Co-lead: TEAGASC; Contributing: All partners)

A template for all communication materials (logo, documents, presentations, brochures, leaflets, posters, banners, newsletters, etc.) will be designed and compiled into a Book of Style and used as the main guidance for visual identity of FarmBioNet. Additionally, an engaging and dynamic website for communication and knowledge exchange and for distributing a strong project brand will be designed and launched. T6.2 will help to develop specific tools and actions to enable social media engagement. Additionally, the following materials will be designed and produced: 20 Practice abstracts PA in the EIP-Agri format, 1 promotional video, 3 Newsletters, (Biannual Newsletter), 48 publications in general Media and and/or specialised agricultural/forestry magazines. And one midterm progress report. A minimum of three presentations at scientific conferences will be given, and all partners will be supported to use their existing communication channels (web pages, social media and newsletters) to share information about the project. NN leaders will coordinate/participate in three events (T3.2).

T6.3 Support the work of NN leaders and other partners (M1-M18, Lead: FSH; Co-lead: TEAGASC; Contributing: All partners)

To maintain an effective working atmosphere and to build skills among consortium partners, the project will provide internal capacity building training to develop skills in developing content and materials, including the art of interviewing, video creation, dealing with media and hot topics, controversies and technical skills including uploading of content onto the website, and social media, etc. These training sessions will be organised twice a year online and once in person during the team meetings. T6.3 will also support partners in social media scheduling via their own social media accounts and communication with mainstream media, alerting them to relevant international awareness days and or events to supplement information flows among partners. Between project meetings, internal e-news articles (1 issue) will be prepared to keep partners informed and inspired about the project actions and external opportunities and information.

## Work package WP7 – Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication - second phase

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP7	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication - second phase		
<b>Start Month</b>	19	<b>End Month</b>	36

### Objectives

To continue to, develop and implement the comprehensive Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication plan (DEC), and a range of communication and dissemination activities. To also provide support and build upon the skills of Thematic network members for the successful implementation of project activities.

### Description

T7.1: Communication and Dissemination activities (M19-M36, Lead: FSH; Co-lead: TEAGASC; Contributing: All partners)

In this task, the web page and social media accounts will be regularly updated and additional dissemination and communication materials will be designed and produced. Specifically: 30 practice abstracts (PA) in the EIP-AGRI format and Handbook, promotional videos (1 general, 4 short videos on selected best BFF practices, and 12 farmer interviews), 3 newsletters, 48 publications in general media and specialised agricultural/forestry magazines, and 2 digital tools (Incentives Navigator and Cost-Benefit Calculator). These tools will be established on the FarmBioNet website to facilitate farmers' decisions. In addition, at least 3 scientific publications will be submitted for peer review and 6 presentations will be given at scientific conferences. All partners will be supported to use their existing communication channels to share information about the project. All partners will coordinate/participate in 3 events where FarmBioNet activities and results will be disseminated (T4.2).

T7.2 Support the work of the NN leaders and other partners (M19-M36, Lead: FSH; Co-lead: TEAGASC)

To maintain an effective working atmosphere and to build skills among consortium partners, the project will provide internal capacity building training to develop skills in developing content and materials, including the art of interviewing, video creation, dealing with media and hot topics/controversies, and technical skills including uploading of content onto the website, social media, etc. This training will be organised twice a year online and once in person during the team meetings. This task will also support partners in social media scheduling (via partners personnel and associated institution's social media accounts) and communication with mainstream media, alerting them to relevant international awareness days and/or events. To supplement information flows among partners between project meetings, internal e-news (2 issues) will be prepared, to keep them informed and inspired about project actions, and relevant external opportunities and information.

T7.3: Develop sustainability and post-project exploitation strategy (M19-M36, Task leader: FSH; Co-lead: TEAGASC; Contributing: All partners)

This task will develop well-tailored sustainability and exploitation strategies for the successful uptake and viability of FarmBioNet solutions. Formulation and implementation of different joint/individual exploitation plans per project partner in accordance with their exploitable results will be the main outcome of this task. We will create, and build on, collaborations with existing, well-known and respected dissemination platforms and knowledge-exchange structures linking people and nature, including the EU Pollinator Initiative, Promote Pollinators (formerly Coalition of the Willing), Oppla, CBD, IPBES, We Value Nature Initiative, and national business and biodiversity platforms.

**Work package WP8 – Coordinating, networking, and data management – first phase**

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP8	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Coordinating, networking, and data management – first phase		
<b>Start Month</b>	1	<b>End Month</b>	18

**Objectives**

## Objectives:

To maintain an effective and friendly working atmosphere among consortium partners, the European Commission and external stakeholders. Administer project resources so project objectives are met, and all tasks are completed within their allocated timelines and budgets. Ensure the punctual delivery of quality Deliverables. Develop a Project management Plan and implement agreed project management procedures. Ensure data gathering procedures are based on a sound legal basis and performed according to the GDPR Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and relevant national legislation. Ensure that technical and financial reports are delivered on time and are in line with the requirements and standards set out in the Grant Agreement.

**Description**

## Description of work

Task 8.1 Establishment of project management procedures (M1-M3, Lead: TEAGASC; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: All partners)

A project handbook that contains strategies and plans to ensure successful delivery of the project will be drafted. We will establish, conflict resolution mechanisms, risk assessment and mitigation strategies, an ethics management plan (including informed consent procedures), reporting guidelines, a data management plan (DMP) and a diversity, equality and gender plan. All data gathering will conform to GDPR and all project outputs will be published via open access. Procedures to ensure fair authorship will be established and agreed by consortium members. Online training for data management in multi-actor projects will be provided to all partners. The handbook will contain guiding principles for setting up the NNS, hiring the FarmBioNet staff, and managing stakeholders. The handbook will be developed and shared with consortium partners at the beginning of the project with a subsequent update during the project implementation (T9.1).

Task 8.2 Project Coordination and Management (M1-M18, Lead: TEAGASC; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: All partners)

We will set up and maintain a collaboration platform for internal communications and sharing documents. We will establish and maintain effective working structures and relations among consortium partners; manage and motivate project staff; organise and chair monthly meetings with the Steering Committee and other meetings as necessary over the duration of the project, e.g. annual face-to-face consortium meetings. We will liaise with the project Advisory Board members to develop guidelines for their participation and facilitate attendance at meetings. Our Advisory Board involves 3 people. We asked several prominent researchers and representatives of NGOs, industry, and policy. We will elect three people from our list prior to our kick-off meeting. We will develop reciprocal relationships with national government agencies and other local, regional, national and international stakeholders. We will collaborate and create synergies with relevant European projects, networks and organizations. We will ensure all financial and budgetary requirements are in line with rules and regulations set out by the Commission and the Consortium Agreement, establish good operating procedures for financial management and ensure that received funds are correctly distributed, accounted for, and that cost statements are received.

Task 8.3 Oversee EU reporting and communication with the EU (M1-M18, Lead: Teagasc; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: All partners)

We will liaise with the European Commission; prepare and submit technical and financial progress reports and deliverables according to the standards and procedures set out in the Grant Agreement, attend events organised by the Commission and present on project progress and outcomes including at H2020 and Horizon Europe network building events. Periodic reporting will be prepared for submission after M18. All partners will contribute to reporting according to their respective roles in each WP.

**Work package WP9 – Coordinating, networking, and data management – second phase**

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP9	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Coordinating, networking, and data management – second phase		
<b>Start Month</b>	19	<b>End Month</b>	36

**Objectives**

Continue to maintain an effective and friendly working atmosphere among consortium partners, the European Commission and external stakeholders. Administer project resources so that the project objectives are met, and all tasks are completed within their allocated timelines and budgets. Ensure the punctual delivery of quality Deliverables and Milestones and final reporting. Update Project handbook. Develop practical policy recommendations

**Description**

Task 9.1 Project Handbook update (M19-M20, Lead: Teagasc; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: All partners)  
We will review and update strategies and plans formulated in the project handbook (T8.1) to ensure ongoing successful delivery of the project. The updated plan will be shared and agreed with consortium partners.

Task 9.2 Project Coordination and Management (M19-M36, Lead: Teagasc; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: All partners)  
We will maintain a collaboration platform for internal communications and sharing documents; maintain effective working structures and relations among consortium partners; continue to manage and motivate project staff; organise and chair monthly meetings with the Steering Committee and other meetings as necessary until end of the project. Liaison with the project Advisory Board and facilitate its attendance at meetings will continue as appropriate. We will develop reciprocal relationships with national government agencies and other local, regional, national and international stakeholders and create synergies with relevant European projects. We will ensure all financial and budgetary requirements are in line with rules and regulations set out by the Commission and the Consortium Agreement, and ensure that received funds are correctly distributed, accounted for, and that cost statements are received.

Task 9.3 Presenting Comprehensive Policy Recommendations (M19-M36 Task leader: TEAGASC; Co-lead: Eco; Contributing: NPWS, ADEPT, AVALON)

FarmBioNet will develop detailed and nuanced policy recommendations for future synergistic use. Utilizing insights from dedicated workshops, demo activities and collaborative efforts and results, the task will ensure inclusivity by engaging diverse stakeholders. The final guidelines and recommendations will be documented in D9.3, culminating in a policy brief. This strategic document will be crafted to maximize impact and outreach, benefiting various communities and aligning with the perspectives of regulators, policymakers, and stakeholders within the regulatory environment.

Task 9.4 Oversee EU reporting and communication with the EU and communication with the Advisory Board and other EU projects (M19-M36, Lead: Teagasc; Co-lead: ECO; Contributing: All partners)

We will continue to liaise with the European Commission; prepare and submit technical and financial progress reports according to the standards and procedures set out in the Grant Agreement, attend events organised by the Commission and present on project progress and outcomes including at Horizon Europe network building events. The final report will be submitted in M36. All partners will contribute to reporting.

**Work package WP10 – Ethics requirements**

<b>Work Package Number</b>	WP10	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Work Package Name</b>	Ethics requirements		
<b>Start Month</b>	1	<b>End Month</b>	36

**Objectives**

The objective is to ensure compliance with the 'ethics requirements' set out in this work package.

**Description**


This work package sets out the 'ethics requirements' that the project must comply with.

## STAFF EFFORT

<b>Staff effort per participant</b>											
<i>Grant Preparation (Work packages - Effort screen) — Enter the info.</i>											
<b>Participant</b>	<b>WP1</b>	<b>WP2</b>	<b>WP3</b>	<b>WP4</b>	<b>WP5</b>	<b>WP6</b>	<b>WP7</b>	<b>WP8</b>	<b>WP9</b>	<b>WP10</b>	<b>Total Person-Months</b>
1 - TEAGASC	6.00	4.40	6.50	5.50	1.70	2.50	3.20	19.50	19.50		68.80
2 - UF	0.30	0.30	6.00	4.00	0.20	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		13.20
3 - ECOLOGICA	0.30	0.30	10.00	9.00	4.70	1.20	1.20	0.90	0.90		28.50
4 - ILE SAS	0.30	0.30	6.00	4.00	0.20	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		13.20
5 - STUDIA	0.60	0.60	1.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	0.60	0.60		13.40
6 - TDPA			3.50	4.25	0.10	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		10.25
7 - BIO AUSTRIA		0.60	5.00	4.00	0.10	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		12.10
8 - SFI	0.30	0.30	7.50	5.50	0.20	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		16.20
9 - SuskeConsulting	0.30	0.30	8.00	8.00	0.10	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		19.10
10 - DHLGH	1.00	1.00	5.50	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		11.40
11 - UNIFI	0.10	0.10	0.50	4.25	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.30	0.30		8.55
12 - ASAJA	0.10	0.10	4.25	4.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		11.85
13 - AVALON	0.30	0.30	6.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.70	0.70		15.00
14 - ADEPT	0.70	0.70	3.00	7.50	0.20	2.00	2.00	0.60	0.70		17.40
15 - FSH					2.00	18.00	14.00	5.30	5.40		44.70
16 - FIBLDE			0.20	2.30	0.10	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		5.00
17 - ZALF	5.00	5.00			0.60	2.00	2.00	0.60	0.60		15.80
18 - AGRIDEA	0.30	0.30	0.50	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.20	0.20		5.00
19 - FIBLCH					0.10	2.00	2.00	0.60	0.70		5.40

<b>Staff effort per participant</b>											
<i>Grant Preparation (Work packages - Effort screen) — Enter the info.</i>											
<b>Participant</b>	<b>WP1</b>	<b>WP2</b>	<b>WP3</b>	<b>WP4</b>	<b>WP5</b>	<b>WP6</b>	<b>WP7</b>	<b>WP8</b>	<b>WP9</b>	<b>WP10</b>	<b>Total Person-Months</b>
<b>Total Person-Months</b>	15.60	14.60	73.45	68.30	20.30	41.70	38.40	31.10	31.40	0.00	334.85

## LIST OF DELIVERABLES

<b>Deliverables</b>						
<i>Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.</i>						
<i>The labels used mean:</i>						
<i>Public — fully open ( automatically posted online)</i>						
<i>Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement</i>						
<i>EU classified — RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision <a href="#">2015/444</a></i>						
<b>Deliverable No</b>	<b>Deliverable Name</b>	<b>Work Package No</b>	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	<b>Due Date (month)</b>
D1.1	Report on Current BFF practices	WP1	17 - ZALF	R — Document, report	PU - Public	4
D1.2	Report on BFF incentives for farmers & foresters and their uptake	WP1	17 - ZALF	R — Document, report	PU - Public	13
D1.3	Report on Farming in Natura 2000 network	WP1	1 - TEAGASC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	10
D2.1	Inter- & transdisciplinary methodological framework for addressing BFF	WP2	17 - ZALF	R — Document, report	PU - Public	4
D2.2	Farm-specific knowledge gaps & needs of farmers & advisors	WP2	1 - TEAGASC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	12
D2.3	Best practices & research findings related to knowledge gaps & responding to farmers' & advisors' needs	WP2	17 - ZALF	R — Document, report	PU - Public	18
D3.1	Database of FaB NN members	WP3	14 - ADEPT	DATA — data sets, microdata, etc	SEN - Sensitive	10
D4.1	Implemented activities of NNs.	WP4	9 - SuskeConsulting	R — Document, report	PU - Public	34
D4.2	Training materials to support stakeholders to create new BFF-orientated OGs	WP4	9 - SuskeConsulting	OTHER	PU - Public	34
D5.1	An online tool (Navigator) providing an overview public & private BFF incentives	WP5	13 - AVALON	DEC — Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	PU - Public	28

<b>Deliverables</b>						
<i>Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.</i>						
<i>The labels used mean:</i>						
<i>Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)</i>						
<i>Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement</i>						
<i>EU classified —RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision <a href="#">2015/444</a></i>						
<b>Deliverable No</b>	<b>Deliverable Name</b>	<b>Work Package No</b>	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	<b>Due Date (month)</b>
D5.2	A cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices to include economic & non-economic factors	WP5	5 - STUDIA	R — Document, report	PU - Public	27
D5.3	A searchable database (Calculator) providing a cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices	WP5	5 - STUDIA	DEC — Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	PU - Public	28
D6.1	DEC Plan	WP6	15 - FSH	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	3
D6.2	Dissemination & communication activities report including best practices (batch 1)	WP6	15 - FSH	R — Document, report	PU - Public	18
D6.3	Training Manual for NN leaders	WP6	15 - FSH	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	9
D6.4	Data Management Plan	WP6	15 - FSH	DMP — Data Management Plan	SEN - Sensitive	6
D7.1	Dissemination & Communication activities report including best practices (batch 2)	WP7	15 - FSH	R — Document, report	PU - Public	36
D7.2	Exploitation, IPR & Sustainability Report	WP7	15 - FSH	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	36
D8.1	Project Handbook - Phase 1	WP8	1 - TEAGASC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	2
D8.2	First consortium meeting minutes	WP8	1 - TEAGASC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	2
D9.1	Updated project handbook	WP9	1 - TEAGASC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	20
D9.2	Consortium meeting minutes	WP9	1 - TEAGASC	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	35
D9.3	Policy recommendations	WP9	1 - TEAGASC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	36

**Deliverables**

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

Public — fully open ( automatically posted online)

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EU classified — RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision [2015/444](#)

Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D10.1	OEI - Requirement No. 1	WP10	1 - TEAGASC	ETHICS	SEN - Sensitive	1
D10.2	OEI - Requirement No. 2	WP10	1 - TEAGASC	ETHICS	SEN - Sensitive	18
D10.3	OEI - Requirement No. 3	WP10	1 - TEAGASC	ETHICS	SEN - Sensitive	36

**Deliverable D1.1 – Report on Current BFF practices**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D1.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	17 - ZALF
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Report on Current BFF practices		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	4	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP1

<b>Description</b>
Written report on current biodiversity friendly farming practices. Evaluation of BFF practices and their potential benefit for biodiversity, ease of implementation from the farmer's perspective, farmer uptake, co-benefits relating to farm climate adaptation and mitigation, and to improve farm sustainability and reduced farm input costs.

**Deliverable D1.2 – Report on BFF incentives for farmers & foresters and their uptake**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D1.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	17 - ZALF
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Report on BFF incentives for farmers & foresters and their uptake		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	13	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP1

<b>Description</b>
Report on BFF incentives for farmers & foresters & their uptake

**Deliverable D1.3 – Report on Farming in Natura 2000 network**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D1.3	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Report on Farming in Natura 2000 network		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	10	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP1

<b>Description</b>
Report on Farming in Natura 2000 network

**Deliverable D2.1 – Inter- & transdisciplinary methodological framework for addressing BFF**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D2.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	17 - ZALF
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Inter- & transdisciplinary methodological framework for addressing BFF		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	4	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP2

<b>Description</b>
Inter- and transdisciplinary methodological framework for addressing biodiversity-friendly farming.

**Deliverable D2.2 – Farm-specific knowledge gaps & needs of farmers & advisors**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D2.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Farm-specific knowledge gaps & needs of farmers & advisors		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	12	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP2

<b>Description</b>
Farm-specific knowledge gaps & needs of farmers & advisors

**Deliverable D2.3 – Best practices & research findings related to knowledge gaps & responding to farmers' & advisors' needs**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D2.3	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	17 - ZALF
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Best practices & research findings related to knowledge gaps & responding to farmers' & advisors' needs		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	18	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP2

<b>Description</b>
Best practices and research findings related to knowledge gaps and responding to farmers' and advisors' needs.

**Deliverable D3.1 – Database of FaB NN members**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D3.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	14 - ADEPT
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Database of FaB NN members		
<b>Type</b>	DATA — data sets, microdata, etc	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	10	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP3

<b>Description</b>
Creating a database of farming and biodiversity national networks.

**Deliverable D4.1 – Implemented activities of NNs.**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D4.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	9 - SuskeConsulting
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Implemented activities of NNs.		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	34	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP4

<b>Description</b>
Report highlighting all the nation network activities.

**Deliverable D4.2 – Training materials to support stakeholders to create new BFF-orientated OGs**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D4.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	9 - SuskeConsulting
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Training materials to support stakeholders to create new BFF-orientated OGs		
<b>Type</b>	OTHER	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	34	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP4

<b>Description</b>
Producing training materials to support stakeholders to create new biodiversity-friendly orientated operational groups. These will include videos, infographics, practice abstracts,

**Deliverable D5.1 – An online tool (Navigator) providing an overview public & private BFF incentives**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D5.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	13 - AVALON
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	An online tool (Navigator) providing an overview public & private BFF incentives		
<b>Type</b>	DEC — Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	28	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP5

<b>Description</b>
An online tool of biodiversity-friendly farming incentives.

**Deliverable D5.2 – A cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices to include economic & non-economic factors**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D5.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	5 - STUDIA
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	A cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices to include economic & non-economic factors		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	27	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP5

<b>Description</b>
Cost-benefit analysis of biodiversity-friendly farming practices

**Deliverable D5.3 – A searchable database (Calculator) providing a cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices**

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D5.3	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	5 - STUDIA
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	A searchable database (Calculator) providing a cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices		
<b>Type</b>	DEC — Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	28	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP5

Description	
Database of cost-benefit analysis	

### Deliverable D6.1 – DEC Plan

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D6.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	DEC Plan		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	3	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP6

Description	
Development of a Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication Plan	

### Deliverable D6.2 – Dissemination & communication activities report including best practices (batch 1)

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D6.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Dissemination & communication activities report including best practices (batch 1)		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	18	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP6

Description	
Report on dissemination and communication activities including best practices. Twenty practice abstracts will be delivered by M18 (D14)	

### Deliverable D6.3 – Training Manual for NN leaders

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D6.3	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Training Manual for NN leaders		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	9	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP6

Description	
Training Manual for national network leaders to provide internal capacity building training to develop skills in developing content and materials, including the art of interviewing, video creation, dealing with media and hot topics, controversies and technical skills including uploading of content onto the website, and social media, etc.	

### Deliverable D6.4 – Data Management Plan

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D6.4	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Data Management Plan		

<b>Type</b>	DMP — Data Management Plan	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	6	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP6

<b>Description</b>
The Data Management Plan will be developed and shared.

### Deliverable D7.1 – Dissemination & Communication activities report including best practices (batch 2)

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D7.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Dissemination & Communication activities report including best practices (batch 2)		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	36	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP7

<b>Description</b>
Report on dissemination and communication activities including best practices. An additional 30 practice abstracts will be delivered by M36 (D16).

### Deliverable D7.2 – Exploitation, IPR & Sustainability Report

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D7.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	15 - FSH
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Exploitation, IPR & Sustainability Report		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	36	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP7

<b>Description</b>
Report on the projects exploitation, intellectual property rights and sustainability

### Deliverable D8.1 – Project Handbook - Phase 1

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D8.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Project Handbook - Phase 1		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	2	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP8

<b>Description</b>
Producing and sharing the first phase of the Project Handbook

### Deliverable D8.2 – First consortium meeting minutes

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D8.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
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<b>Deliverable Name</b>	First consortium meeting minutes		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	2	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP8

<b>Description</b>
Minutes from first consortium meeting shared.

### Deliverable D9.1 – Updated project handbook

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D9.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Updated project handbook		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	20	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP9

<b>Description</b>
Updated project handbook

### Deliverable D9.2 – Consortium meeting minutes

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D9.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Consortium meeting minutes		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	35	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP9

<b>Description</b>
Consortium meeting minutes

### Deliverable D9.3 – Policy recommendations

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D9.3	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	Policy recommendations		
<b>Type</b>	R — Document, report	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU - Public
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	36	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP9

<b>Description</b>
Policy brief produced and shared

### Deliverable D10.1 – OEI - Requirement No. 1

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D10.1	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	OEI - Requirement No. 1		

<b>Type</b>	ETHICS	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	1	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP10

Description
<p>Appointment of Ethics Advisor</p> <p>Farmers, foresters, advisors, other stakeholders, researchers, policymakers will participated in case studies, surveys, interviews, observations, consultations, trainings, networking or dissemination events. The project plans to involve participants from vulnerable groups to whom a special approach will be applied. However, further information concerning the whole process of involving them in the project has not been provided (e.g. recruitment, consent, withdrawal, etc.)</p> <p>Personal data will be collected and processed. Previously collected personal data will be used as well. However, it has not been sufficiently explained: 1) what data will be collected, 2) what previously collected data will be reused, 3) was any of this data sensitive; 4) which partner(s) will collect, store, process this data? It is also unclear why the proposal mentions adequate encryption practices, while the beneficiaries claims that they do not plan to record sensitive personal data. Partners from Switzerland and Serbia are engaged in the project. Activity related to biodiversity-friendly farming practices will be conducted in Switzerland. Personal data will be collected from participants in Switzerland but the beneficiary does not provide detailed information about the process. It is also unclear whether personal data will be processed by the Serbian partner.</p> <p>The beneficiary states that the project will deal with endangered fauna and/or flora/ protected areas, but the project does not satisfactorily elaborate on this issue.</p> <p>Identified ethics issues have not been adequately addressed. Therefore, an ethics advisor must be consulted at least on the following points: participants from vulnerable groups, UE-non-EU countries import/export of personal data, sensitive data collection and processing, and endangered fauna and/or flora/ protected areas. A report by the Ethics Advisor must be submitted as a deliverable at the end of each reporting period.</p>

### Deliverable D10.2 – OEI - Requirement No. 2

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D10.2	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	OEI - Requirement No. 2		
<b>Type</b>	ETHICS	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	18	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP10

Description
1st Ethics Advisor Report

### Deliverable D10.3 – OEI - Requirement No. 3

<b>Deliverable Number</b>	D10.3	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	1 - TEAGASC
<b>Deliverable Name</b>	OEI - Requirement No. 3		
<b>Type</b>	ETHICS	<b>Dissemination Level</b>	SEN - Sensitive
<b>Due Date (month)</b>	36	<b>Work Package No</b>	WP10

Description
2nd Ethics Advisor Report

## LIST OF MILESTONES

<b>Milestones</b>					
<i>Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.</i>					
<b>Milestone No</b>	<b>Milestone Name</b>	<b>Work Package No</b>	<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	<b>Means of Verification</b>	<b>Due Date (month)</b>
1	Consortium agreement document signed	WP8	1 - TEAGASC	Consortium agreement document signed by all partners & accepted by the EC	2
2	Kick-off meeting	WP8	1 - TEAGASC	Minutes of meeting	2
3	EU FarmBioNet network set up & 12 FaB NN established	WP3	9 - SuskeConsulting	Minutes of meetings	3
4	Communication and dissemination strategy prepared	WP6	15 - FSH	Communication and dissemination plan	3
5	Website and social media launched	WP6	15 - FSH	Website and social media available and functioning.	3
6	Research findings and best practices collected	WP2	17 - ZALF	Reports on best practices	18
7	BFF incentives reviewed	WP1	1 - TEAGASC	Report on BFF incentives	13
8	Management. requirements in Natura 2000 areas reviewed	WP1	1 - TEAGASC	Report on management requirements	10
9	BFF incentives Navigator	WP5	5 - STUDIA	BFF Navigator functioning	24
10	Cost-benefit analysis BFF database	WP5	5 - STUDIA	Cost-Benefit Calculator functioning	24

## LIST OF CRITICAL RISKS

<b>Critical risks &amp; risk management strategy</b>			
<i>Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.</i>			
<b>Risk number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Work Package No(s)</b>	<b>Proposed Mitigation Measures</b>
1	Losing a key partner at a critical stage of the project Likelihood = L, Impact = H Overall assessment = M	WP8, WP9	Close interaction and open communication between partners and building on strong existing relationships will enhance project delivery. Involvement of partners with a broad range of expertise in BFF is key to ensuring work is carried out. The Consortium has strong networks and could find a suitable substitute partner if mandatory.
2	Delays with critical tasks due to complexities inherent in a project of this size and scope Likelihood = M, Impact = H Overall assessment = H	WP10, WP8, WP5, WP3, WP2, WP9, WP1, WP4, WP6, WP7	The appointment of an experienced project coordinator and the use of effective management and communication techniques will minimise the risk. A project management handbook, agreed by all partners, at the start of the project, will outline the processes and procedures to be followed to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the project, including dealing with delays and underperforming partners.
3	WP lead absent from project for a period of time; Likelihood = M; Impact = M; Overall assessment = M	WP8, WP5, WP3, WP2, WP9, WP1, WP4, WP6, WP7	Co-leaders have been allocated to each WP and will take over WP leader responsibilities if the issue arises.
4	Difficulty in identifying BFF practices and incentives and identifying related knowledge gaps Likelihood = Low, Impact = High, Overall assessment = M	WP5, WP2, WP1, WP6, WP7	Partners have vast experience working with farmers on biodiversity initiatives. The work plan includes a review of existing material, which several sources have been already identified. For new material, the Consortium has a stakeholder network across Europe including farmer networks, academics, policymakers, NGOs and practitioners. They will capitalise on this network to identify best practice cases and work with the new FaB NNs to share and advance knowledge. A minimum of two champion/lead stakeholders for each NN will be identified and will be key to ensuring smooth and continuous stakeholder engagement throughout the project.
5	Lack of engagement from FaB NN participants; Likelihood = M; Impact = H; Overall assessment = H	WP3, WP4	Partners have strong existing connections in BFF and vast experience working with practitioners at the national level. A planned range of activities to maintain interest from NN participants will ensure their contributions are integrated. NN participants will benefit from outputs in a reciprocal exchange of knowledge.
6	There is too much or too little information on	WP2, WP1	The consortium has vast experience undertaking evaluations of biodiversity

<b>Critical risks &amp; risk management strategy</b>			
<i>Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.</i>			
<b>Risk number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Work Package No(s)</b>	<b>Proposed Mitigation Measures</b>
	selected practices and cases, or research offers contradictory findings, making comparison and synthesis work difficult Likelihood = L, Impact =		practices, and farmer-orientated and case study research. The consortium will undertake a review of BFF practices and incentives, involving a large number of examples. A smaller number of cases for in-depth study will be selected based on the type and volume of information available, and their potential to provide cross-cutting lessons for Natura 2000 areas (WP1). The Consortium covers a broad range of European languages. Findings will be validated with FaB NN members and tailored to local/regional contexts.
7	Difficulties for integration of good practices and strategies developed in WP2; Likelihood = L; Impact = H; Overall assessment = Med	WP3, WP2, WP1, WP4	Close integration between partners and WPs, FaB NN members, practitioners and policymakers will ensure recommendations and strategies are designed to maximise their potential impact at national and European levels. Analysis of Natura 2000 context in WP1 will ensure compatibility with protected sites.
8	Difficulty in producing and disseminating results that are relevant for farmers and other actors Likelihood = L, Impact = H Overall assessment = M	WP6, WP7	The team are experienced in many innovative techniques that will be deployed to facilitate analysis using different perspectives and approaches. The consortium has strong existing networks that they will build on to communicate findings to a range of actors. Several tailored engagement and outreach activities are planned, targeting various stakeholders. Two dedicated dissemination WPs will focus on maximising the reach and impact of FarmBioNet's outputs.
9	Project activities are interrupted due to pandemics or other unforeseen events Likelihood = M, Impact = M Overall assessment = M	WP8, WP5, WP3, WP2, WP9, WP1, WP4, WP6, WP7	Recognising that most partner institutions will have their own procedures following COVID-19, our project management handbook will include a protocol specifically tailored to FarmBioNet, which will include procedures for interactions in the project following unforeseen interruptions. Meetings and other key project activities can/will be undertaken online if face-to-face interactions are not safe/possible.

## PROJECT REVIEWS

<b>Project Reviews</b>			
<i>Grant Preparation (Reviews screen) — Enter the info.</i>			
<b>Review No</b>	<b>Timing (month)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Comments</b>
RV1	21	Brussels or Online	The Coordinator shall contact the REA project officer 3 months before the end of the RP in order to set up the modalities of the review process / review meeting
RV2	36	Brussels or Online	The Coordinator shall contact the REA project officer 3 months before the end of the RP in order to set up the modalities of the review process / review meeting

## Description of the action for Farmer-focused **Biodiversity** and Agricultural Knowledge **Network** (FarmBioNett)

### Action plan

Part A

Part B

Version 1

25 July 2024

### History of changes

Page/section	Nature of change
Part A	
Section: Work Package	<p>The text associated with Task 6.1 was changed and now reads: Based on the findings of T2.1 and feedback received from T4.2 and T5.1, FarmBioNet will develop and make available a user-friendly online resource for farmers/foresters seeking information on available incentives for BFF practices. The tool (a BFF incentives Navigator) will provide a comprehensive overview of public and private incentives for BFF in the 12 NN in the national language. It will be a searchable online platform co-developed with stakeholders and will be driven by their needs. A database search engine will be organised by NN, type of agriculture production, type of BFF measure, and funding source (public or private). For each BFF incentive, the Navigator will provide detailed information about the name and type of the incentive, eligibility criteria, description of management prescriptions and administrative requirements, and level of support payments, as well as links to relevant supporting</p>

	stakeholders. Interactive features will be used to present the relevant information on maps, graphs, or charts.
Section: Deliverables	Changed the date of deliverable 9.2: First consortium meeting from month 1 to month 2.
Section: Deliverables	Deliverable 7.4 Data Management Plan was added
Section: Milestones	Changed the delivery date of milestone 2: Kick-off meeting) from month 1 to month 2.
Section: Milestones	Changed the delivery date of milestone 4 from month 2 to month 3.
Risks	The following text was added to the proposed mitigation measures for risk 4: A minimum of two champion/lead stakeholders for each NN will be identified and will be key to ensuring smooth and continuous stakeholder engagement throughout the project.
Part B	
Section 3.2 Capacity of participants	Additional text on CH partners AGRIDEA and FIBLCH was added. This text details the activities of the partners and provides an overview of their budgets.
Part A and B	
Section: Ethics self-assessment	Ethics section created.

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## 1.1 Objectives

The overall objective of FarmBioNet is to stimulate and foster knowledge exchange and the integration of research and practices related to biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF), including those relevant to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The project's specific objectives (SO) are based on the S.M.A.R.T principle, ensuring they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. FarmBioNet's SOs, results (R), key performance indicators (KPIs), their target values (TVs) and means of verification (MoV) are shown below:

SO1: Establish an EU network of farmers/ foresters, researchers, advisors, other AKIS actors, and other relevant actors, as well as national networks to improve biodiversity in farmland and forests	
R1.1 An EU thematic network on biodiversity and farming is established and functioning	KPI & TV: <b>Number of members:</b> 12 (R1.1), 300 (R1.2) <b>Diversity &amp; number of activities:</b> three newsletters, at least 24 workshops and 24 BFF-related events, 25 exchange visits. MoV: Regularly updated membership records and registration data. Activity reports, event announcements, photos, video clips, media coverage, and attendance records
R1.2 Twelve Farming and Biodiversity National Networks (FaB NNs) are established and functioning	
SO2: Conduct a comprehensive description and analysis of (i) current biodiversity-friendly farming and forestry practices (BFF), including those relevant to climate mitigation or adaptation; (ii) needs of farmers/foresters and their knowledge gaps; (iii) incentives for farmers/foresters to improve biodiversity; and (iv) EU requirements for biodiversity protection in agricultural and forest areas (Birds and Habitats Directives)	
R2.1 A comprehensive description and analysis of current BFF practices. KPI & TV: <b>Number of practices analysed and their geo coverage:</b> at least 36, min. three per member state (MS). MoV: Report on current BFF practices	
R2.2 A comprehensive description and analysis of the needs of farmers/foresters and their knowledge gaps related to biodiversity. KPI & TV: <b>Number of needs analysed and their sectorial &amp; geo coverage:</b> at least 36, min. 1 per sector and min. three per MS. MoV: Report on the needs of farmers/foresters & their knowledge gaps	
R2.3 A comprehensive description and analysis of public and private incentives for farmers/foresters to improve biodiversity. KPI & TV: <b>Number of incentives analysed and their sectorial &amp; geo coverage:</b> at least 50, min. 1 per sector and min. three per MS. MoV: Report on incentives for farmers/ foresters to improve biodiversity	
R2.4 A comprehensive description and analysis of EU requirements for biodiversity protection in agricultural and forest areas (Birds and Habitats Directives). KPI & TV: <b>Number of management plans analysed:</b> at least 12, min. 1 per MS. MoV: Report on EU requirements for biodiversity protection in agricultural and forest areas	
SO3: Collect existing best practices and research findings that are ready to be put into practice but not sufficiently known or used by practitioners, and summarise, share, and present them in a language that is easy to understand and targeted to farmers and foresters	
R3.1 A comprehensive description and analysis of existing best BFF practices and research findings ready to be put into practice. KPI & TV: <b>Sectoral diversity, number and geo coverage of BFF practices analysed:</b> at least 1 per sector, at least 24 in total, min. 2 per MS. MoV: Report on best BFF practices and research findings	
R3.2 Existing best practices and research findings summarised, shared, and presented in a language that is easy to understand and targeted to farmers/ foresters. KPI & TV: <b>Variety &amp; number of materials developed &amp; events:</b> at least 7 different types of materials (50 practice abstracts, 30 videos, 6 infographics, 59 training materials, 2 handbooks/manuals, 2 online decision-support tools, reports), 59 workshops and 50 exchange visits. MoV: Info material developed, photos, video clips of events, media coverage	
SO4: Create practical tools enabling farmers/foresters to ease and increase the adoption of BFF practices	
R4.1 A functioning farmers/foresters-friendly online tool enabling navigation through BFF public and private incentives. KPI & TV: <b>Level of user engagement and adoption:</b> min 300 users by the end of the project. MoV: Navigator's user metrics: website visits, unique visitors & session duration	
R4.2 A comprehensive multi-factor cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices. KPI & TV: <b>Sectoral diversity &amp; number of BFF practices analysed:</b> at least 1 per sector, 7-12 in total. MoV: Report on cost-benefit analysis	
R4.3 A functioning farmers/foresters-friendly online tool enabling a multi-factor cost-benefit analysis of BFF practices. KPI & TV: <b>Level of user engagement and adoption:</b> min 300 users by the end of the project. MoV: Calculator's user metrics: website visits, unique visitors & session duration	
SO5: Create and disseminate an extensive range of practical, applicable, and appealing end-user materials for farmers and foresters and communicate project results to other relevant actors	

R5.1 A range of attractive and easy-to-understand materials created and fed into existing dissemination channels. KPI & TV: **Variety & number of materials disseminated**: at least 7 different types of materials (50 practice abstracts, 30 videos, 6 infographics, 59 training materials, 2 handbooks/manuals, 2 online decision-support tools, reports). **Utilisation of existing dissemination channels**: at least 80% of the materials are disseminated through existing channels commonly accessed by farmers and foresters. MoV: Materials developed (incl. online resources) with clear messaging and visual elements. Documentation of the distribution process, including the channels utilised, website tracking. Communicate results to policy makers.

R5.2 Active and engaging presence in social and regular media. KPI & TV: **Level of engagement on social media platforms**: an average engagement rate of at least 5% across all social media platforms by the end of the project. MoV: Monitoring social media analytics to track engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and clicks.

All five SOs are highly pertinent to the call because they focus on networking for BFF, BFF-relevant analysis and generation of knowledge sharing in a language that is easy to understand and targeted to farmers and foresters.

## 1.2 Coordination and/or support measures and methodology

### 1.2.1 Rationale

There is a broad consensus among [scientists, policymakers, societal stakeholders](#), and the [agricultural sector](#) that current farming practices play a significant role in biodiversity decline. [Despite the EU's public policy efforts](#), which employ a variety of strategies, legislative instruments (such as Natura 2000), incentives (e.g. CAP agri-environment-climate measures) and informational channels (e.g. farm advisory services), [biodiversity on EU farmland continues to decline](#). Despite this, [biodiversity is essential for agriculture](#) as it provides various ecosystem services. [Agriculture directly benefits](#) from healthy soils and pollinator populations, pest regulation, increased water storage capacity in the landscape, and other ecosystem services. Biodiversity-rich agricultural systems are [more resilient to climate change](#) and [crop disease](#) and offer food that is more nutritious.

**Biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices are largely unknown and untapped in some countries, and a thematic network can help to remedy this.** There is an extensive reservoir of knowledge about BFF management practices, drawn from the results of research projects and activities at the EIP-AGRI level. This reservoir contains solutions ready for implementation, but practitioner knowledge is deficient. [Research shows](#) that the adoption of BFF practices is higher when farmers have more knowledge and experience, strong social connections with other farmers, and opportunities to learn, receive information, and share experiences via peer-to-peer mentoring. For farmers/foresters to change their management practices to help biodiversity (for example by including biodiversity in farm management plans), a range of conditions must be in place, including remuneration for implementing BFF practices and improved supporting regulations. Moreover, farmers also need to be able to [connect these practices to their identity and pride as farmers](#).

#### What is biodiversity-friendly practices (BFF) practices?

BFF practices promote diversified multi-functional agricultural systems that increase heterogeneity and connectivity of farm landscapes. They encompass specific actions, techniques, strategies, or interventions implemented within agricultural systems to support and enhance the richness and abundance of biodiversity, deliver (co-)benefits for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and restore and protect healthy ecosystem functions while producing food, feed, fibre, fuel, or other agricultural products. Actions/strategies should be compatible with different socio-cultural, environmental, and political contexts, including intensive and extensive farming systems and (agro)forestry across diverse European regions. Actions can include practices such as establishing and maintaining wildlife corridors, native vegetation buffers, natural pest control, soil and water conservation, the adoption of precision agriculture techniques to minimise chemical inputs and the preservation or restoration of natural habitats within/adjacent to farmland.

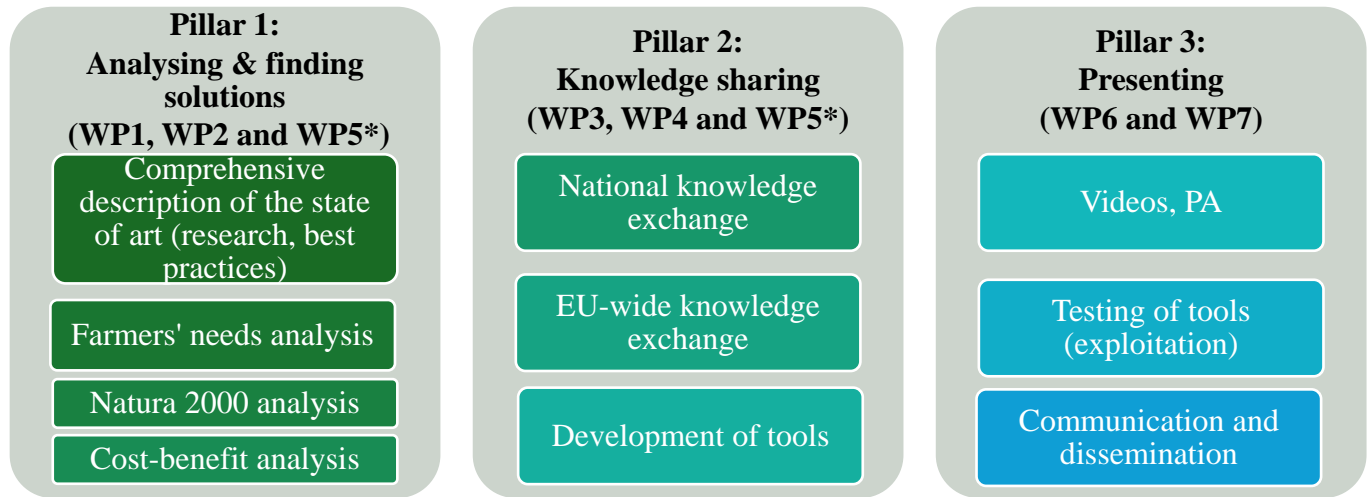
### 1.2.2 Approach and methodology

FarmBioNet's approach and methodology are geared to stimulate collaborative innovation on BFF across the EU by improving knowledge exchange, sharing experience, and providing practical, easy-to-understand information to farmers/foresters and advisors. The project will implement nine WPs with precise, logical, and interrelated tasks with reasonable timing and sequencing to facilitate this. FarmBioNet rests on three pillars (**Figure 1**), enabling it to undertake a series of Coordination and Support Actions (CSA) to create a farmer-centred thematic network that compiles and disseminates practical knowledge around BFF methods:

1. **Pillar 1: Analysing & finding solutions**: Review in WP1 (current BFF practices, BFF incentives, and N2000 requirements), WP2 (best BFF practices, knowledge gaps, needs of end users) and WP5 (cost-benefit analysis).
2. **Pillar 2: Knowledge sharing**: Activation of an EU multi-actor consortium and 12 NNs to support farmers in

3. **Pillar 3: Presenting:** Communication and dissemination of project findings, knowledge sharing and learning materials (WP6 and WP7).

**FarmBioNet is expressed and structured following an incremental approach** stemming from an in-depth assessment of the current situation (Pillar 1) towards knowledge sharing (Pillar 2) and presentation of the project's findings, promotional and educational materials, and tools adapted to users' real needs and expectations (Pillar 3).



**Figure 1:** The three pillars of the project (WP5\* partly, some tasks)

**FarmBioNet's approach and methodology consider the need to create an enabling environment stimulating co-creation and cross-fertilisation, promoting BFF and its innovation-driven solutions.** To facilitate this, the project will employ a bottom-up approach in collecting farmers/foresters' knowledge, needs, expectations, and practices through face-to-face meetings (WP3 and WP4) and online surveys (WP1 and WP2), to be organised in each project country. The bottom-up approach will be complemented by collaboration with other AKIS actors such as advisors, academia and research, education bodies, associations, media, and public authorities.

**FarmBioNet's approach and methodology consider farming in Natura 2000 areas.** The designation of Natura 2000 has often resulted in reservations, misunderstandings, and resistance from farmers/foresters. The project will provide some good examples of how to overcome these problems and successfully resolve conflicts through a partnership approach at the local level, resulting in solutions leading to socio-economically viable farming in Natura 2000 areas. These examples will be included in the review of good BFF practices (T2.3).

#### Farmland in Natura 2000 sites

A large area of the terrestrial part of the Natura 2000 network depends on the continuation of BFF practices to maintain its characteristics, relying on the activities of many farmers. Farmers who contribute to suitable management of critical habitats and species often farm under challenging circumstances and are highly vulnerable to economic pressures, which can lead them to abandon BFF systems. Although Birds and Habitats Directives do not directly set standards for land management (the design of conservation measures is left to the MS), the Natura 2000 designation has generated fears and misunderstandings. Farmers are often afraid of mandatory limitations on agricultural land use, and voluntary incentives offered for the implementation of nature conservation measures or extensive agricultural management are often not economically sustainable for farmers.

**FarmBioNet addresses the needs of farmers and foresters and their advisors. However, its focus is on farming, while the forestry dimension will be addressed mainly by encompassing the agro-forestry concept as BFF measure.** FarmBioNet emphasises farming because the EC has already funded several thematic networks on agro-forestry ([AFINET](#), [AF4EU](#), [FOREST4EU](#), [ResAlliance](#)). Forestry actors will be included in Farming and Biodiversity NNs (FaB NNs) and other project activities where logical and feasible. The consortium consists of a forestry university (UFBG) and a forestry research institute (SFI), which is an additional guarantee that forestry aspects will be covered appropriately.

**FarmBioNet is based on Horizon guidelines for best networking practices.** The design and structure of its EU network and 12 FaB NNs follow 20 [EURAKNOS project](#) recommendations on designing and implementing thematic networks to maximise user engagement and impact. FarmBioNet takes into account that (i) transferred knowledge must be up-to-date and adapted to the end-user context and specific needs, (ii) information provided must be understandable and actionable (concrete and practical/ applicable), (iii) the success of the solutions should have been

proven/demonstrated in the field and (iv) lack of time is a significant barrier to farmers' knowledge acquisition, and (v) the 'ready-to-use' knowledge should be easily accessible and searchable.

**FarmBioNet strives to be as inclusive as possible.** It will pay attention to equally address and cover different (i) farming methods (conventional, organic, agro-ecology, nature-inclusive farming, permaculture, agro-forestry, silvopastoral systems, etc.), (ii) types of production (arable, mixed farming, animal husbandry, fruit & vine production, speciality crops, etc.), (iii) age and gender groups, and (iv) size of holdings (small, medium, large and very large holdings). AKIS representatives will be included in NNs.

**FarmBioNet will pay special attention to addressing and including the latest BFF solutions provided by digital innovation and technologies.** Precision agriculture tools, IoT sensors, satellite imagery, and AI-driven decision support systems can enhance BFF practices by optimising resource usage, monitoring ecosystems, and providing real-time insights for sustainable land management.

**FarmBioNet's approach and methodology align with the conclusions and recommendations of the latest EC initiatives on BFF.** In designing the project, findings and recommendations of the [EIP-AGRI Focus Group 47, "Enhancing the biodiversity on farmland through high diversity landscape features,"](#) were considered. FarmBioNet addresses BFF-related needs (see [Mini Paper 1](#)), including the lack of coverage of BFF knowledge by the existing AKIS and the need for improving user acceptance through co-creating best practices with end users. The project will produce a massive flow of practical information between geographical areas in Europe, as it will be implemented in 12 countries, representing [53% of the EU-utilised agricultural area](#), [52% of permanent grassland](#) and [61% of the agricultural area in the NATURA 2000 network](#).

**The consortium will strive for gender balance in its management, organisation, and participation, with almost equal male and female partner participants.** The project's preparatory phase has paid particular attention to achieving this balance, and the consortium partners will undertake the following activities during the project: (i) incorporating analysis of gender roles and relations into study methodologies. In T2.2 and T5.2, gender-specific aspects will be considered. These tasks will take a farm household perspective and focus on the role of farm women in taking financial, technical and strategic decisions about the farm; (ii) striving for a balanced representation of women and men in the various project activities; (iii) ensuring that women advisors and farmers are represented when identifying good practice cases, and (iv) maintaining equal representation of women and men in the project team and project management roles.

### Farmer needs

Farmers already implementing or considering implementing BFF practices are facing many problems and obstacles such as: (i) resistance from industrial agriculture lobby groups; (ii) gaps and discrepancies between farming and nature conservation legislative acts; (iii) regulatory and administrative inconsistencies, obstacles and barriers to acquiring incentives; (iv) fear of economic failure, financial barriers in transitioning to BFF practices and market competition from conventional agriculture; (v) fear of resistance or scepticism from traditional farming communities and family members; (vi) lack of practical knowledge of BFF practices; and many others. The farmer needs arising from these problems and obstacles are presented in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1** Farmers' needs and how they will be addressed in FarmBioNet

Farmers need	How the FarmBioNet will address it
<b>Evidence</b> that BFF practices bring clear benefits (essential for them, not only for society) such as increased yield and/or reduced costs, leading to an increased profit	Cost benefit analysis (T5.2) & BFF Cost-Benefit Calculator (T5.3)
<b>Financial incentives:</b> information on existing public and private incentives, presented in understandable language, in one place	Analysis of public & private incentives (T1.2) and BFF Incentives Navigator (T5.1)
<b>Practical knowledge</b> of BFF practices for different production systems and different biogeographical areas	Practice abstracts, videos, demonstrations of best practices, (T6.2 & T7.1), national and international exchange visits (T3.2-3.4, T.4.1-4.3)
<b>Societal recognition</b> for the work they are doing on biodiversity protection	Farming for Nature contest for the best farmer, farm walks (T3.2 & T4.1), videos portraits of farmers, articles, & TV & radio broadcasting (T6.2 & T7.1)

### Multi-actor approach

To make the implementation of the project and its outcomes more reliable, demand-driven, extensively shared, and relevant to society, the project is designed on a multi-actor approach (MAA). This guarantees key actors' genuine involvement and proactive participation in co-creating and cross-fertilising the project results. The key actors are the project's (i) end users (farmers/farmers' groups and associations, foresters, and advisors) and (ii) target groups (other

AKIS actors, media, consumers, and policymakers). To maximize its MAA, the FarmBioNet follows and addresses the eight MAA elements required by [the EC \(p. 22\)](#) (Table 1.2).

**Table 1.2:** FarmBioNet’s response to Multi-Actor Approach elements

MAA element	FarmBioNet response and approach
Targeting the needs of end users	All project objectives and activities are focused on the needs of the three end users mentioned above. They address (i) potential solutions (T1.1, T2.2), (ii) problems/ challenges (T1.3, T2.3), (iii) opportunities (T1.2), (iv) the need for more information (T2.2, T6.2 and T7.1), (v) the need for networking and knowledge exchange (T3.2-3.4, T.4.1-4.3), and (vi) the need for practical online tools enabling end users to make informed decisions (T5.1-5.2).
Balanced choice of critical actors	The project involves a range of critical actors (defined above), ensuring a well-balanced representation of various points of view and roles regarding BFF practices, and reaching a vast target audience of stakeholders. The composition of the consortium (see Section 3.2), comprising (i) farmers and farmers' organisations, (ii) NGOs, (iii) advisory services, (iv) research institutes, (v) universities, (vi) GOs, and (vii) SMEs, contributes to this balance, too.
Balanced use of existing practices and tacit knowledge	The project concept and methodology consider the need to unite explicit and tacit knowledge in a balanced way. The project will employ end users’ existing practices and tacit knowledge (T1.1, T2.2-2.3, T3.2-3.4, & T.4.1-4.3), and effectively communicate and disseminate these (T2.2, T6.2 & T7.1). Cross-fertilising skills, competencies, and ideas between actors (T3.2, T.4.1-4.3) will generate innovative findings and solutions more likely to be widely applied.
Facilitating multi-actor engagement process	To better reach and capture knowledge from farmers/foresters and advisors, the project will organise 'cross-fertilisation' through FaB NNs covering 12 MS (T3.1-3.2 and T4.1-4.2) and their national languages, creating spill overs while considering regional differences and specificities in the knowledge exchange, learning, and co-creation of the FaB NNs.
The project's added value	While FarmBioNet seeks to create synergies, it will avoid duplication with ongoing or completed projects and networks. Its approach and methodology are geared towards creating added value in the following six ways. 1. While most related projects focus on societal/policy needs and solutions, FarmBioNet targets solely the needs of farmers/foresters and advisors (T1.1-1.3, T2.2-2.3). 2. It will create a European and 12 FaB NNs (T3.1) – which do not exist at present. 3. It equips farmers/foresters and advisors with practical decision-making tools (T5.1 & T5.3). 4. FarmBioNet is based on NNs (T3.1), while other similar projects are/were based on living labs (e.g. SHOWCASE, AE4EU). 5. Contrary to other projects, it will address the new green architecture of the 2023–2027 CAP. 6. It considers private incentives for BFF (T1.2 and T5.3).
Producing practical tools and products	FarmBioNet will provide knowledge, and tools that are easy to understand, practical and freely accessible, e.g. the BFF Incentives Navigator (T5.1), the BFF Cost-Benefit Calculator (T5.3), and a range of educational and promotional materials in national languages (videos, infographics, ‘practice abstracts’, etc.) targeted to farmers, forester, and advisors (T6.2 & T7.1).
Feeding the outputs into the existing dissemination channels	Instead of developing its own Knowledge Hub, FarmBioNet will streamline its outputs to the existing Hubs, notably those funded by the EC, such as <a href="#">EIP-AGRI OGs</a> , <a href="#">AgroEcology Europe</a> , <a href="#">Organic Farm Knowledge</a> (managed by FIBLCH), <a href="#">Results Based Payments Network</a> (managed by SUSKE), etc. It will feed them into existing dissemination channels most consulted by the end users, including (i) advisory services (T3.1-3.2 & T4.1-4.2), (ii) FAB NNs (T3.1), (iii) own website, newsletters, and social media (T6.2 & T7.1).
Involvement of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups	The project will liaise, and create synergies with related EIP-AGRI OGs (T3.4 and T4.3) and involve them in FaB NN activities (T3.1-3.2 and T4.1-4.2). Some partners are members of OGs (TEAGASC, BIOAT, STUDIA, TPA and ILEAS). Active BFF-relevant OGs exist in 8 consortium countries (Table 1.3. Several have agreed to participate in FarmBioNet (T3.1-3.2 and T4.1-4.2) and share their experience. FarmBioNet will develop and conduct a capacity-building and training programme (1 workshop per country) (T3.4 and T4.3) to support stakeholders in proposing and creating new biodiversity-orientated OGs in the EIP-AGRI context.

**Table 1.3:** Selected BFF-related Operational Groups in project countries (Projects in bold were contacted)

Country	Operational Group
Austria	<b>(1) Value-added mountain farming - valorisation of ecosystem services, (2) innovations in grazing techniques, (3) Market Gardening, (4) Strip farming</b>
Croatia	(1) Eco seeds - Innovative methods of development and production of organic seeds and seeds of

	conservation varieties in order to preserve biodiversity
Germany	(1) Creation of conservation headland in grassland, (2) Appreciation, value creation and valorisation of environmental services in organic fruit growing, (3) Sustainable bee forest - Innovative ideas from forestry to increase the food supply for bees and pollinating insects
Ireland	<b>(1) Protecting Farmland Pollinators, (2) FarmPEAT, (3) Pearl Mussel Project, (4) North Connemara Locally-led AES, (5) Inishowen Upland Farmers, (6) Hen Harrier Project</b>
Italy	(1) <b>NEWTON - Agroforestry Network</b> (2) Resilient and sustainable use of resources towards efficient water and land management – Resurge (3) Development of agroecological pest protection strategies on seed crops for a reduction in the use of insecticides and the protection of pollinators
Netherlands	<b>(1) Farmers' nature, (2) Collective Deltaplan Landscape</b>
Romania	(1) New Product Development in the territory served by Parta Transilvaniei LAG
Slovenia	(1) Supporting pollinators in intensive agricultural landscapes to promote biodiversity, (2) Hedges as a support of biodiversity, preserving ... of Slovenian countryside and providing ecosystem services, (3) Farming with(for) biodiversity on lowland farms in Slovenia - EIP VIVEK
Spain	<b>(1) Growing Biodiversity - multifunctional margins, (2) INDIBIO-OLIVA - biodiversity indicators in olive groves, (3) BIOLIVAR - natural capital in the cultivation of olive groves, (4) C-OLIVAR - carbon accumulation practices</b>

### Cooperation with other projects


A special effort will be made to create synergy with BFF projects and initiatives across the EU, notably EC-funded (Horizon, LIFE, OGs, etc.). FarmBioNet partners have recently participated and/or currently participate in several related national and international research and knowledge transfer projects relevant to BFF such as: [RestPoll](#), [Contracts2.0](#), [EFFECTS](#), [CONSOLE](#), [Blühendes Oesterreich](#), [Farming for Nature Ireland](#), [Farming for Nature Austria](#), [Climate Smart Advisors](#), [Path2Dea](#), [i2connect](#), [Visionary](#), [EU-FarmBook](#), [LIFE Metamorphosis](#), [LIFE TransilvaCooperation](#), [EU Grassland Watch](#), and several others. FarmBioNet will foster collaboration and knowledge sharing between project experts, leveraging experiences and best practices from these projects.

### Implementation of open science practices

The FarmBioNet project will systematically follow best practices for Open Science including following the FAIR data principles in Data Management Plan. From the project's inception, early and open sharing will be practiced. The project will actively support the publication of results in open access peer-reviewed scientific journals. FarmBioNet's academic partners have a budget allocated in WPs and WP7 for open access publications. When applicable, reports and publications will be made available through public repositories widely known and accessed, like the Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe (OpenAIRE.eu). Partners' own repositories will also be used e.g. Teagasc Research. Whenever self-archiving of publications is allowed, articles will be made available on the FarmBioNet website, as plain text, and as editorial open access. FarmBioNet will ensure no personal data is exposed without full consent, as per GDPR regulations. The availability of project outputs as Open Access will ensure: (i) higher citation counts for reports and academic publications, (ii) greater impact due to increased visibility with practitioners and stakeholders (iii) improved likelihood that future research and analysis will be able to build on and reuse our results, thereby increasing the reproducibility and continuity of research results. Significant effort will be made to ensure outputs have a gender balance in their authorship.

### Management of data and other research outputs

A Data Management Plan (DMP) will be prepared and delivered in M2 (D8.1), detailing what data the project will generate, whether and how it will be exploited or made accessible for verification and re-use, and how it will be curated and preserved. The DMP will be updated as needed and will address the topics that are indicated within the DMP template for HE programmes, and it will be prepared in accordance with the "Guidelines on FAIR Data Management in H2020". FarmBioNet will make use of existing online data platforms and services. To ensure findability, identifiers such as, Persistent Identifiers issued by Zenodo data platform (Zenodo DOI) and the AKIS platform will be used, in scenarios where parts of datasets cannot be shared, the reasons for this will be clearly mentioned (e.g. intellectual property, security-related, compliance with GDPR, etc.). When technically possible, data will be anonymised, to protect the privacy of users. Several standards will be used to ensure **interoperability** and proper communication, protection, and reusability of the generated data, established early in WP6. **Reusability** of datasets is ensured using standardised and interoperable data modelling approaches. *Curation and storage/preservation costs*: T8.1 and T9.1 will organise, manage, maintain, and make data available to authorised entities. Post-project, the maintenance of datasets will be handled by the assigned partners. *Data Exploitation and Access*: FarmBioNet will actively participate in the Open Research Data and the publication / archiving of metadata and data in an open access data repository. The process of data collection and collation will be the responsibility of the respective WP and Task leaders and will be made available in line with each institution's data protection policy.

*Data Sustainability:* After analyses, FarmBioNet's data, in  summary of anonymised form, having respect to the Informed Consent Agreement with research participants, will be transferred to national or international social science data archives, which will ensure data sustainability beyond the project. The WP and Task leaders associated with the analysis of the qualitative data will deposit these resources in their national social science data archives and ensure that awareness of these data is raised amongst the community of social scientists working throughout the EU.

### Compliance with the “Do no significant harm principle”

FarmBioNet is fully compliant with the Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) Principle since its activities (both those carried out during the project and the expected life cycle impact at an exploitation stage), substantially contribute in a positive way and/or do not significantly harm any of the six environmental objectives set out the EU Sustainable Finance Taxonomy Regulation. An analysis of key considerations that could potentially harm any of the six objectives was performed and appropriate actions and measures were embedded in the methodology.

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## 2. Impact

### 2.1 Project's pathways towards impact

#### 2.1.1 Contribution of project results towards the outcomes

The *FarmBioNet* results will contribute to all five expected outcomes (EOs) of the call. The EOs are categorised as Scientific (Sc), Economic (E), Technological (T), or Societal (So) outputs. In the case of EO1, the outcome is split into two separate outcomes for easier reference. Our assumptions are based on a conservative approach but aimed to benchmark a plausible scale of additional progress facilitated by *FarmBioNet*.

**EO 1: Support the implementation of the cross-cutting objective of modernising the agricultural sector by **fostering and sharing knowledge, innovation, and digitalisation** in agriculture & rural areas and encouraging their uptake, and **EU Green Deal and farm-to-fork objectives****

#### **Pathways to achieve EO 1:**

**EO 1.1: Sharing knowledge, innovation, and digitalisation and encouraging their uptake (So):** this will be achieved mainly through the EU and 12 FaB NNs (**R1.1 & R1.2**) that will connect and bring together farmers, foresters, advisors, and other actors. The network efforts will be reinforced by (i) the provision of a range of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation materials that will be fed into existing dissemination channels most consulted by farmers and foresters (**R5.1**) and (ii) active and engaging presence in social and regular media channels (**R5.2**). Results describing and analysing biodiversity-related aspects, such as current practices (**R2.1**), needs and knowledge gaps (**R2.2**), incentives (**R2.3**), best practices and research findings (**R3.1 & R3.2**), will help to achieve EO 1.1. Two online tools (**R4.1 & R4.3**) will enhance innovation and digitalisation and encourage farmers' contribution to the sector's modernisation. **EO 1.2 Contribution to EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork objectives (So):** promoting wider adoption of BFF practices (**R1.1, R1.2, R5.1, R5.2**) will help protect ecosystems, restore soil health, mitigate climate change, and reverse the loss of pollinators and other wildlife – all priorities of the EU Green Deal. Facilitating cooperation (**R1.1 & R1.2**), provision of evidence (**R2.1, R2.2, R3.1 & R3.2**), and digital tools (**R4.1 & R4.3**) will smooth the path towards increased diversity of landscape features, organic production, and reduced pesticide/fertiliser use – important Farm to Fork objectives.

**Target groups to benefit:** Farmers, foresters and advisors will benefit from *FarmBioNet's* exchange activities, networks, learning and dissemination materials, and tools. Researchers will benefit from data and research findings, while policymakers will be provided with policy-relevant evidence. Consumers will benefit from information on a range of BFF societal benefits.

#### **The scale and significance of the project's contribution to EO 1:**

**Baseline (B) – B1:** BFF-related knowledge, innovation, and digitalisation are adopted by 15% of EU farmers/foresters – mainly those practising [organic farming](#), BFF agri-environment schemes, [agro-forestry](#), and related practices. **B2:** 3% of EU farmers/foresters maintain high-diversity landscape features (HDLFs) ([Farm to Fork Strategy](#) biodiversity-related target for 2030 is at least 10% farmland area). **Assumptions (A):** A1- increased adoption indicates successful knowledge dissemination. A benchmark is to achieve at least a 10% increase in EU farmers/foresters adopting BFF-related knowledge, innovation, and digitalisation. **A2:** min. 10% increase in EU farmers/foresters maintaining Ecosystem Services (ES). **Scale KPIs:** A1: at least 16.5% of EU farmers/foresters have adopted BFF-related knowledge, innovation, and digitalisation. A2: 3.3% of EU farmers/foresters have maintained HDLFs. **Significance KPI:** A1: 0.5 million additional ha under BFF practices, leading to enhanced biodiversity (e.g. species richness, habitat quality, etc.), climate mitigation, better adaptation to climate change. A2: 0.3 million additional ha under HDLFs leading to enhanced ES and natural capital.

**EO 2: Collection & distribution** of easily accessible practice-oriented knowledge, particularly the existing **best practices and research findings** ready to be put into practice

**Pathways to achieve EO 2 (Sc and So):** this EO will be achieved through (i) a comprehensive review of existing best practices and research findings that are ready to be put into practice (R3.1) and (ii) by summarising, sharing, and presenting these in a language that is easy to understand and targeted towards farmers and foresters (R3.2). These findings will be shared through the EU and 12 FaB NNs (R1.1 & R1.2) and distributed through channels most consulted by farmers and foresters (R 5.1), including social and regular media channels (R5.2).

**Target groups to benefit:** Farmers, foresters, advisors, and scientists will benefit from *FarmBioNet's* collection and distribution of easily accessible practice-oriented knowledge.

**The scale and significance of the project's contribution to the EO 2:**

**Baseline (B):** the EU BFF best practices and research findings ready to be put into practice are fragmented and scattered all over the Internet, so B = 0. **Assumptions (A):** best practices and research findings collected and distributed by the project will be exciting and appealing to the target groups and many will use them. **Scale KPI:** at least 5% of EU farmers/foresters will benefit from FarmBioNet's best practices and research findings. **Significance KPI:** 0.5 million additional hectares under BFF practices, leading to enhanced biodiversity (e.g. species richness, habitat quality), climate mitigation and better adaptation to climate change.

**EO 3: Maintenance of the practical knowledge for the long-term** – beyond the project period – using the main trusted dissemination channels farmers/foresters most often consult

**Pathways to achieve EO 3 (So):** this EO will be achieved by maintaining the project website (part of R5.1) and social media channels (part of R5.1) seven years after the completion of the project. Additionally, a long-term provision of the project's practical knowledge will be enabled through (i) the EU-maintained websites, such as [EU Farm Book](#), [EIP-AGRI Operational Groups](#) and [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) (part of R5.1), (ii) advisors who will continue sharing knowledge with farmers and foresters directly (R1.1 & R1.2), (iii) FaB NNs established (R1.1), (iv) integrating project resources into communication channels, newsletters, and events of other networks – to ensure continued engagement (R1.1 & R5.1).

**Target groups to benefit:** Farmers, foresters and advisors will benefit from *FarmBioNet's* maintenance of practical knowledge beyond the project period.

**The scale and significance of the project's contribution to the EO 3:**

**Baseline (B)** practical knowledge relating to BFF in the EU is fragmented and scattered over the Internet, so B = 0. **Assumptions (A):** practical knowledge of EU BFF practices generated by the project will also interest the target groups after the project ends. **Scale KPI:** at least 7% of EU farmers and foresters will benefit from FarmBioNet's practical knowledge. **Significance KPI:** 1 million additional ha under BFF practices, leading to enhanced biodiversity, climate mitigation and better adaptation to climate change.

**EO 4: Increased flow of practical information between farmers/foresters in the EU in a geo-balanced way**, creating spillovers and taking account of the **differences between territories**

**Pathways to achieve EO 4 (So):** the composition and geographical distribution of the project partners across 12 EU MS, comprising a diversity of (i) climatic zones, (ii) reliefs (from lowlands to the Alps) and (iii) crop and livestock types is geographically well balanced. Relevance to local farmers/foresters will be ensured by considering region-specific content and resources, including regional differences and specificities related to climate, soil, and agricultural practices in the knowledge exchange, learning, and co-creation of the FaB NNs (R1.1). The same goes for results describing and analysing biodiversity-related aspects, such as current practices (R2.1), needs and knowledge gaps (R2.2), incentives (R2.3), best practices & research findings (R3.1 & R3.2). Key project events will be rotating between regions and EU MS. The exchange visits will be organised in a geographically balanced way, as well as exchange and support to EIP OGs (R1.1 & R1.2). Farmers from different regions will be paired to foster cross-regional collaboration and exchange. Communication and dissemination (R5 & R5.2) will consider this, too. The Project website (part of R5.1) will be multilingual, and the critical dissemination materials will be available in 10 languages.

**Target groups to benefit:** Farmers and foresters will benefit from *FarmBioNet's* geographically balanced approach, considering differences between territories

**The scale and significance of the project's contribution to the EO 4:**

**Baseline (B):** the available practical information on BFF is often presented in a geographically unbalanced way without considering the differences between territories, so B = 0. **Assumptions (A):** a project paying attention to region-specifics, ensuring balanced geographical representation, and considering ecological, economic, social and cultural differences between territories will likely attract more farmers/foresters to adopt BFF practices. Access to multilingual information will double the likelihood of farmers/foresters trying new BFF techniques. Networks considering region-specifics and exchange visits between similar regions may lead to voluntary spill overs of up to 20% as farmers/foresters share what they learn with their fellows operating under similar conditions. **Scale KPI:** at least 5% of EU farmers/foresters will benefit from FarmBioNet's geographically balanced approach. **Significance**

**KPI:** 0.5 million additional ha under BFF practices, leading to enhanced biodiversity (e.g., species richness, habitat quality, etc.), climate mitigation and better adaptation to climate change.

**EO 5: Greater user acceptance** of collected solutions and more intensive dissemination of existing knowledge by **connecting actors, policies, projects, and instruments** to speed up innovation and promote the faster and wider co-creation and transposition of innovative solutions into practice.

**Pathways to achieve EO 5 (So):** this will be achieved by (i) connecting and engaging with farmers, foresters, advisors, and other AKIS actors across Europe through networking events, workshops, , knowledge sharing and transfer, and co-creation of innovative solutions (R1.1 and R1.2), (ii) an online tool enabling navigation through BFF public and private incentives (R4.1), (iii) a Cost-Benefit Calculator (R4.2), (iv) provision of learning and other materials that will be fed into existing dissemination channels most consulted by farmers and foresters (R5.1) and (v) active and engaging presence in social and regular media channels (R5.2). A special effort will be made to create synergy with ongoing BFF projects and initiatives across the EU, notably EC-funded (Horizon Europe, LIFE, OGS, etc.) (part of R1.1). Greater clarity of policies relating to BFF (part of R2.3, R2.4, R5.1).

**Target groups to benefit:** Farmers, foresters and advisors will benefit from *FarmBioNet's* exchange activities, networks, learning and dissemination materials, and tools. Researchers will benefit from data and research findings, while policymakers will be provided with policy-relevant evidence. Consumers will benefit from information on a range of BFF societal benefits.

**The scale and significance of the project's contribution to the EO 5:**  
**Baseline:** BFF is practised by 15% of EU farmers and foresters – mainly those involved in [organic farming](#), BFF agri-environment schemes, [agro-forestry](#), and related practices. **Assumptions:** increased adoption of BFF practices indicates that solutions collected by the project resulted in greater user acceptance. A benchmark is to achieve at least 10% more EU farmers/foresters accepting BFF practices. **Scale KPI:** at least 16.5% of EU farmers/foresters have adopted BFF practices. **Significance KPI:** 0.5 million additional ha under BFF practices, leading to enhanced biodiversity (e.g. species richness, habitat quality), climate mitigation and better adaptation to climate change.

The *FarmBioNet* results will contribute to the two (#2 and #5) expected impacts (EI) of the call:

**EI #2:** Areas related to the **European Green Deal benefit** from further deployment and exploitation of environmental observation data, **products, and “green” solutions**.

**Pathways to achieve EI #2 (So):** deployment and exploitation of environmental products and “green” solutions will be achieved by: (i) a review of existing best practices and research findings that are ready to be put into practice (R3.1), (ii) summarising, sharing, and presenting these in a language that is easy to understand and targeted to farmers/foresters (R3.2), (iii) describing and analysing farmers/foresters' needs and knowledge gaps (R2.2) and incentives to improve biodiversity (R2.3), (iv) digital tools (R4.1 & R4.3), (v) networking and knowledge exchange (R1.1 & R1.2), and (vi) communication and dissemination (R5 & R5.2).

**Target groups to benefit:** Farmers and foresters are the key end users of “green” products and solutions. Researchers are critical in “discovering” these products and solutions. Advisors are essential for further dissemination and adoption, while informed policymakers can create an enabling environment by creating proper policy instruments. Consumers will benefit from information on a range of BFF societal benefits.

**The scale and significance of the project's contribution to the EI #2:**  
**Baseline (B):** BFF is practiced by 15% of EU farmers and foresters. **Assumptions (A):** a broader adoption of BFF will lead to a more significant deployment and exploitation of environmental knowledge, practices and “green” solutions – and vice versa – contributing to the achievement of the EU Green Deal's efforts in greening agriculture and improving biodiversity. Wider adoption of BFF will help protect climate and ecosystems, restore soil health, and reverse the loss of pollinators and other wildlife. A benchmark is to achieve at least a 1% adoption increase annually over the 10 years after the project ends. **Scale KPIs:** at least 16.6% of EU farmers and foresters (a compounding figure of a rise of 1% annually) have adopted BFF practices. **Significance KPIs:** 0.8 million additional ha under BFF practices, leading to enhanced biodiversity (e.g., species richness, habitat quality, etc.), climate mitigation adaptation. A 10-30% increase in populations of farmland birds and pollinators on participating lands and 5-20% reductions in pesticide usage over 5-10 years.

**EI #5: Stakeholders and end users**, including primary producers and consumers, **are better informed and engaged** thanks to effective platforms such as AKIS

**Pathways to achieve EI #5 (So):** this will be achieved by (i) connecting and bringing together farmers, and other AKIS actors (R1.1 & R1.2), (ii) providing relevant learning and dissemination materials and tools that can be delivered both online and in-person (R1.2, R5.1 & R5.2). Results describing and analysing biodiversity-related aspects, such as current practices (R2.1), needs and knowledge gaps (R2.2), incentives (R2.3), EU requirements for biodiversity protection in agricultural and forest areas (R2.4), best practices & research findings (R3.1 & R3.2), will help to achieve EI #5, too. The two online tools (R4.1 & R4.3) will facilitate a higher engagement of stakeholders

and end users. This will be reinforced by (i) providing a range of materials fed into dissemination channels most consulted by farmers and foresters (R5.1), and (ii) active and engaging presence in social and regular media channels (R5.2). A long-term perspective will be provided through (i) the EU-maintained Websites, such as [EU Farm Book](#), [EIP-AGRI Operational Groups](#) and [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) (part of R5.1), (ii) advisors who will continue sharing knowledge with farmers directly (R1.1 & R1.2), (iii) FaB NNs established (R1.1), (iv) integrating project resources into communication channels, newsletters, and events of other related networks to ensure continued engagement (R1.1 & R5.1).

**Target groups to benefit:** Farmers and foresters will benefit from *FarmBioNet's* provision of information and networking activities, enhancing engagement. Consumers will benefit from information on a range of BFF societal benefits.

**The scale and significance of the project’s contribution to the EI #5:**

**Baseline (B):** due to the lack of effective learning and dissemination materials and tools, stakeholders and end users are not sufficiently informed and engaged, so B = 0. **Assumptions (A):** attractive learning materials and effective dissemination channels are critical in informing and engaging primary producers and consumers. **Scale KPI:** at least 5% of EU farmers/foresters and 1% of consumers will benefit from FarmBioNet’s learning materials and tools and dissemination through off and on-line channels over the 10 years after the project ends. **Significance KPIs:** 0.8 million additional ha under BFF practices, leading to enhanced biodiversity, climate mitigation and better adaptation to climate change. As natural pest control improves, a 10-30% increase in populations of farmland birds and pollinators on participating lands and 5-20% reductions in pesticide usage over 5-10 years.

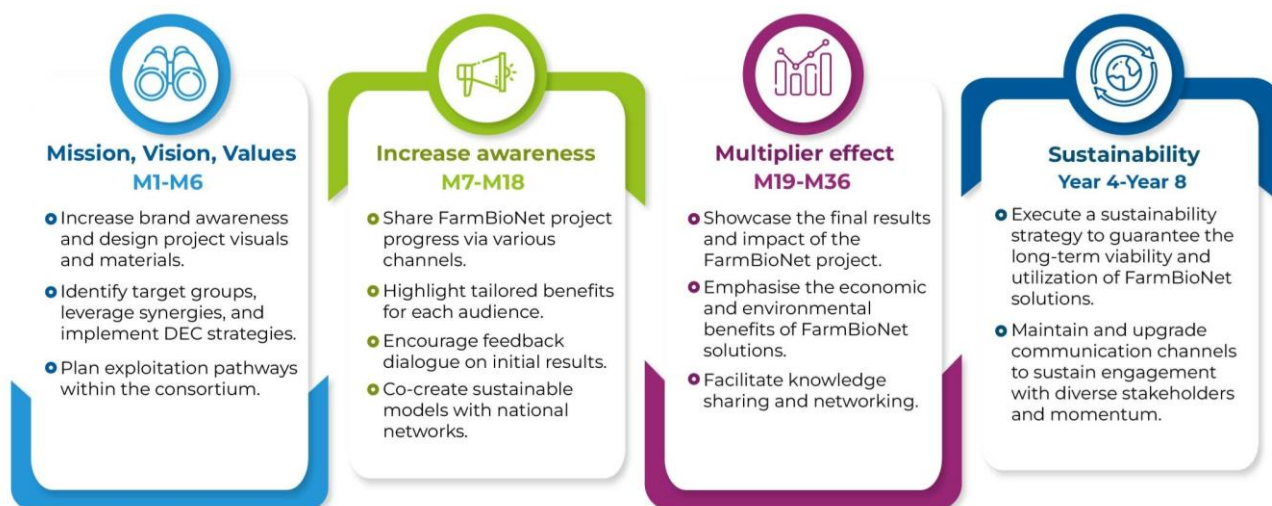
**2.1.2 Requirements and Barriers**

A [PESTEL analysis](#) framework is employed to analyse the barriers that *FarmBioNet* must overcome to reach the desired impact. Political (P), economic (E), social (S), technology (T), environmental (E), and legal (L). Likely impact (I) and probability (P) = high (H); medium (M) and low (L). Likely evolution over time (Ev): decrease (D), increase (I), stable (S).

Type of barrier	I	P	Ev	Mitigation measure
<b>P</b> Resistance from industrial agriculture lobbies and differing national agri policies discouraging biodiversity.	H	M	S	Involve engaging stakeholders early, fostering dialogue (R1.2), and showcasing economic benefits (R4.2) to gain policymakers' and stakeholders' support. Provide good digital tools (R4.1 & R4.3).
<b>E</b> Fear of economic failure, financial barriers in transitioning to BFF practices and market competition from conventional agriculture.	H	M/H	I	Provide information on incentives (R2.3), best practices (R3.1) and examples of profitable biodiversity-friendly farms, discuss it in FaB NNs (R1.2) and highlight in D&C activities (R5.1 & R5.5). Provide good digital tools (R4.1 & R4.3)
<b>S</b> Fear of resistance or scepticism from traditional farming communities and family members leads to social exclusion. Lack of capacities.	M/H	H	D/S	Promote knowledge sharing and cooperation and enhance social cohesion and exchange visits among farmers (R1.2). Discuss this in FaB NNs (R1.2) and highlight social success stories in D&C activities (R5.1 & R5.5). Provide relevant training (R1.2).
<b>T</b> Advancing technology. Poor access to technologies, risk of dependence on technological solutions. Technological & scientific outputs do not reach farmers & are hard to adopt.	M	M	I	Provide information on state-of-art technologies for BFF (R1.2, R5.1 & R5.5). Compare them and provide alternative solutions. Present best practices (R3.1) and examples of farmers/foresters using them. Present them in a language that is easy to understand (R3.1). Discuss them and stimulate exchange visits (R1.2).
<b>E</b> Impacts of biodiversity loss and soil degradation due to intensive farming practices. Climate change impacts on production.	H	M	S/I	Highlight the best biodiversity and climate-smart farming solutions (R3.1) and provide examples of farmers/foresters practising them (R1.2, R5.1 & R5.5). Provide relevant training (R1.2).
<b>L</b> Regulatory and administrative hurdles and inconsistencies to acquire incentives. Discrepancies between farming and nature conservation legislative acts.	L			Involve stakeholders early and foster dialogue (R1.2 & R5.5) to streamline legal frameworks, support compliance and adaptation to evolving legal requirements. Advocate for harmonisation of agri and environmental regulations at the EU level (R1.2).

## 2.2 Measures to maximise impact - Dissemination, exploitation and communication

The farmer-focused project, FarmBioNet is well equipped to support and facilitate the uptake of its innovative and sustainable, biodiversity-agriculture-forestry nexus, findings and practices. A Dissemination, Communication and Exploitation (DEC) strategy, underpinned by a robust multi actor approach (MAA) will be delivered by M03. This strategy will utilise multiple channels to share the project’s purpose, and results to all target groups. The main goal behind our DEC strategy is to boost the growth of the FarmBioNet ecosystem, to maximise impact among key stakeholders and target groups at the broader societal, academic, and media level. Through inclusive dialogue and tailored communication, the strategy will sustain stakeholder engagement in promoting BFF practices, targeted at farmers and foresters and in a language that is easy to understand.



**Figure 2.2a:** The four phases for the successful implementation of the DEC strategy

### 2.2.1 Communication strategy and measures

FarmBioNet will employ a focused communication strategy to enhance awareness and understanding around BFF practices, highlighting the multiplier capabilities of the FarmBioNet thematic network and its benefits. Through educational empowerment and trust-building efforts, the aim of the communication strategy is to underscore the importance of addressing BFF practices. Tailored communication approaches will cater to diverse stakeholder interests, ensuring clarity, relevance, and impact. FSH as WP leader will organise and provide internal capacity building training to develop skills in development of content and materials, including the art of interviewing, video creation, dealing with media and hot topics/controversies, and technical skills including uploading of content onto the public website, etc. (during team meetings, the first to be organised at kick-off and online via webinars).

**Table 2.2a:** Target Groups (TGs) and key messages

Target group	Key Message
<b>TG1: Farmers &amp; Foresters</b> (relevant associations, advisory networks, (practitioners))	<i>“You are guardians of biodiversity – check our materials and tools to see how it pays you back. Help us tell your stories to scientists, policymakers and consumers.”</i>
<b>TG2: Academia &amp; Research</b> (Universities, scientific institutes, public and private research bodies)	<i>“Check our collection of scientific findings on biodiversity-friendly farming and see how it performs – scientifically validated. Contribute with your research overcoming the gap where research findings are not integrated into practice and policies.”</i>
<b>TG3: Policymakers &amp; Regulators</b> (Different Government bodies at local, regional, and national level)	<i>“You are guardians of societal interests. Check our findings to see what biodiversity-friendly farming delivers to society and your voters. Create policies informed by empirical data that has been proven in practice and implement policy mechanisms to boost biodiversity-friendly farming.”</i>

<b>TG4: Media &amp; Specialised channels</b> (Traditional media outlets, specialised info programs focused on farming and environment)	“Biodiversity-friendly farming is attractive and positive – citizens love being informed about how farmers and public money help protect flowers, butterflies, birds, and nature. Do you make enough effort to inform them about it? Join us in telling the stories about farmers leading the change to protect nature.”
<b>TG5: Society</b> (Consumers, general public, NGOs)	“Buy the food from farmers going the extra mile to protect Nature’s beauty and diversity and help us in sustaining farmers working towards a greener and healthier future.”

FarmBioNet employs a comprehensive array of tools and channels within its communication strategy, strategically designed to augment awareness, foster engagement, and facilitate the sharing of value across all targeted groups. By embracing a multi-faceted approach, FarmBioNet will ensure that all messages resonate with diverse audiences, maximising the potential for impactful interaction and fruitful collaboration.

**Table 2.2b:** Communication tools and channels

<b>Visual Identity/Branding Material</b>	All target groups	<b>By M03</b>
Create a strong visual identity and create versatile promotional materials for events, in print and digital.		
KPIs: <b>1</b> (Printable) brand book and guideline; <b>1</b> website (including Social and Synergy Exchange corner); <b>5</b> FarmBioNet Social Media accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter/X, YouTube, Instagram); Diss. And Comm. materials: <b>1</b> promo set (posters, brochures, project factsheet, notebook, folder, roll-up, banner, bookmark), <b>1</b> Social Media Kit (feed and story templates, video covers)		
<b>Digital outreach</b>	All target groups with focus on Society	<b>From M03 - onwards</b>
FarmBioNet will establish impactful social media accounts and a website to deliver accessible content to both experts and non-experts. These platforms will be used as vibrant spaces for real-time updates on project activities and direct interaction with a wide audience, and project contributors.		
KPIs: <b>30,000</b> website page views, <b>&lt;50%</b> Bounce rate; <b>100</b> blog posts; <b>2,000</b> total no. of social media followers; <b>1,000+</b> Newsletter subscribers, <b>20-30%</b> avg. click-to-open rate; (Source: Mailchimp); <b>30</b> editorial backlinks in top-tier online media outlets and portals.		
<b>Press Outreach &amp; Multimedia</b>	All target groups	<b>From M03 onwards</b>
Stimulate discourse and engagement, develop immersive experiences and catalyse collaborative growth.		
KPIs: <b>20+</b> press releases; <b>24+</b> Participation in media speeches/interviews (TV, radio); <b>96+</b> featured articles in magazines and online portals relevant to the topic (Table 2.2d).		

**2.2.2. Dissemination strategy and measures**

The FarmBioNet Dissemination Plan aligns with the DEC plan, emphasising a comprehensive description of the state of current and improved BFF practices, including those relevant to climate mitigation and adaptation. Our focus is to reach relevant global stakeholders to raise awareness, drive behaviour change, and advocate for stronger focus on the cost/benefit aspects of the practices collected and summarised.

**Table 2.2c:** Dissemination plan - Objectives, measures, target groups (TGs) and KPIs

<b>KPI 1</b> (TG: focus on TG1, all)	Organising <b>workshops and events</b> , such as conferences, fairs, farm walks, etc. <b>Enhance capacities</b> of all partners for <b>networking and distribution of practice-oriented knowledge</b> .	<b>59 workshops</b> (48 NN workshops and 11 workshops for OGs), <b>72+</b> national events, <b>50 exchange visits</b> (48 national and 2 international) <b>1</b> FarmBioNet final event, <b>6</b> capacity building trainings for NN leaders (2 in-person & 4 on-line), <b>1</b> capacity building manual
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<b>KPI 2</b> <b>TG:</b> <b>(focus on TG1, all)</b>	<b>Designing tools to transfer knowledge, build capacity, and raise awareness.</b>	<b>6+</b> infographics (in 10 languages), <b>50+</b> practice abstracts (in 10 languages), <b>1</b> Handbook with all practice abstracts, <b>30+</b> videos ( <b>2</b> promotional, <b>4+</b> on best practices, <b>24+</b> farmer portraits) <b>59+</b> training materials, <b>2</b> online decision-support tools (incentives Navigator & Cost-Benefit Calculator)
<b>KPI 3</b> <b>(TG: All, focus TG1 &amp; TG2)</b>	<b>Disseminating project findings, networking knowledge, and policy recommendations</b> to relevant stakeholders. Participation in <b>top-tier events</b> such as conferences, forums, summits, workshops, etc.	<b>1,000+</b> newsletter subscribers with <b>6</b> multilingual newsletters published (10 languages), <b>3+</b> publications in peer-review open-access journals; <b>10+</b> publications in scientific conferences, <b>2</b> policy briefs, <b>10+</b> partnerships with relevant EU-funded projects, platforms, and initiatives

During the proposal preparation, consortium partners have secured commitment from 43 key media partners and outlets from 11 project countries (Table 2.2d) to feature and publish information on the project, its activities and good practices. The committed media partners will be supported to publish promised articles to deliver impact.

**Table 2.2d** FarmBioNet committed media channels.

Country	Media
Austria	Salzburger Bauer, topagrar, Journal "Da schau her", BIO AUSTRIA Zeitung
Bulgaria	<a href="http://www.gorabg-magazine.info">www.gorabg-magazine.info</a>
Croatia	Gospodarski list. Agro klub, Eko zona
Germany	Journal "Ökologie und Landbau"
Ireland	The Farmers Journal, RTE, The Farming Independent
Italy	National Radio and TV broadcast
Netherlands	Agenda Natuurinclusief, Volksrant, Trouw, NRC, NOS Radio 1, Biojournal
Romania	Viata Satului, National TVR1
Slovenia	Kmecki glas, Glasilo zelena dezela, Silvae et Ligni, Gozdarski Vestnik
Spain	Tierra y Vida, Agricultura de Conservación, Revista Agricultura, Agrónoma, ABC and national and regional broadcasts (Tierra y Mar, Agrosfera, Espacio Protegido)
Switzerland	bioaktuell.ch, Podcast FiBL Focus, Journal "Bioaktuell Magazin", Schweizer Bauer, Bauernzeitung, Die Grüne
International	orgprints.org, organic-farmknowledge.org, <a href="http://www.youtube.com/@FiBLFilm">www.youtube.com/@FiBLFilm</a>

### 2.2.3. Dissemination and Communication Activities after the End of the Project

FarmBioNet will persist in disseminating and communicating results for a minimum of five years beyond the project's duration, aligning with the post-project sustainability plan. FSH will enact the following three measures. 1. Sustain FarmBioNet web-based communication channels. 2. Extend the hosting plan to uphold the website (ensuring open access to results such as deliverables and scientific papers for download, with partners' contact details regularly updated to enhance engagement with key stakeholders). 3. Leverage synergies with pertinent projects, networks, and platforms to amplify the continued development of FarmBioNet's results.

### 2.2.4. Exploitation Pathways and Strategy

**A. Setting Exploitation Strategy Objectives:** The FarmBioNet Exploitation Strategy is crucial to capitalising on the knowledge, networking, and innovations developed throughout the project, and to bringing the value generated by the project to both **farmers/foresters** (from a business perspective), and **society** (from a scientific, political, and societal perspective). The FarmBioNet exploitation strategy aims to **identify, evaluate, and present Key Exploitable Results (KERs)** and to designate potential fields for exploitation **during, and beyond the end of the project**, adopting a comprehensive methodology. **B. Methodology:** FarmBioNet Exploitation methodology is based on three major pillars. 1. *Planning and Monitoring:* To safeguard the effective and timely exploitation of all KERs, FarmBioNet will adopt a constant monitoring approach. All project partners will have to periodically report on their KERs on a 6-month basis. The reporting will take place through an online database, which will incorporate all relevant exploitation aspects. The portfolio of project results will serve all identified target groups and project partners. Ownership of the KERs will be defined in the early phase of the project's implementation. After the end of each reporting period, all project results will be initially assessed and evaluated, and project partners and stakeholders

will be able to consider relevant exploitation strategies, based on the nature of each result (e.g., commercial, non-commercial). **2. Targeted Exploitation and Sustainability Strategies:** Commercial KERs: All commercial KERs will be assessed in the context of Individual Exploitation Plans, while Joint Exploitation Plans will also be implemented in case some KERs are directed to the same group of stakeholders and/or in the case of Joint Ownership of results (in line with the IP Strategy). Individual and Joint Exploitation Plans are expected to tackle the following: Overview of the organisation (KER owner), Description of the KER(s) and definition of the value proposition(s), relevant market insights, organisation’s operations financial and marketing plan, as well as IPR considerations, enhancing the scalability and replicability of the results. Non-Commercial KERs: Individual and Joint Exploitation Plans will be elaborated, to identify the appropriate exploitation pathways as follows: Scientific advances/re-use: Scientific outputs such as models, methods, prototypes, and any available data generated can be used by the scientific community for future research. Policymaking: Project results may provide policymakers and regulators with evidence-based information for forming new policies or changing existing ones. Training and education: Some of the results can be used to develop education and training programs for farmers/foresters, professionals and/or the general public. **3. Measures to boost exploitation at EU level:** This stage is about the presentation of FarmBioNet KERs to most of the stakeholders identified earlier. **C. Links with other Project Activities:** FarmBioNet’s Exploitation Strategy will work in lockstep with Communication and Dissemination since KERs need to be disseminated to specific target groups identified in the context of KER monitoring and/or identify new target groups in line with the Exploitation Strategy. The **Data Management Plan** will also be taken under consideration as it addresses knowledge sharing and awareness raising, and portrays how data can be used (for research and/or commercial purposes). Furthermore, **Open Science Practices** will also enhance exploitation through Open Access (Scientific Exploitation) and the early involvement of stakeholders (societal, political). **IP management** will also play a crucial role in the effective exploitation of commercial results. **D. Other means of enhancing exploitation:** The Project will also utilise other existing means that will reinforce FarmBioNet exploitation potential where applicable: The [Horizon Results platform](#), the [Open Research Europe platform](#) and the [Innovation radar](#).

### 2.2.5. Feedback to policy measures

The FarmBioNet project is designed to empower policymakers by providing them with policy recommendations, and guidelines to integrate BFF practices into new policy frameworks. FarmBioNet aims to equip policymakers with actionable insights geared towards enhancing the adoption of BFF, cost-effective, and sustainable practices, all while navigating the challenges outlined in the European Green Deal (EGD). By leveraging a combination of evidence-based, and real-world data, the project maps out strategic initiatives to drive sustainable change. A key aspect of the project involves the implementation of NNs, each focusing on scanning best practices. The findings from these networks will form the basis of a minimum of two policy briefs, providing policymakers with nuanced insights into the practical applications of BFF management practices. Additionally, the project will foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders, ensuring that the policy briefs are informed by diverse perspectives and aligned with the evolving needs of the farmers/foresters, and society as a whole. Through these efforts, FarmBioNet aims to catalyse the adoption of BFF practices, driving forward the objectives of the EGD while promoting sustainability and resilience in the broader agricultural and forestry sectors.

**Intellectual Property (IP) management** is an intake for the exploitation of scientific project results. The Project Management Office (Teagasc) with support from the Innovation/IP Manager will handle IP issues, and develop and implement the project IP and Exploitation Plan. Once a year, they will review the results generated by the project and update the IP and Exploitation plan. The management of IP will involve: (i) Identification of IP arising; (ii) Propose management strategies for identified IP; (iii) Discuss with relevant IP developers potential management options; (iv) Agree management approaches in collaboration with relevant parties such as Technology Transfer Offices, or Innovation Departments; and (v) Agree Plans for exploitation. To avoid the creation of conflicts regarding rights of use and commercialisation of certain IP arising from the project, the partners will, during the negotiation of the grant agreement, conduct due diligence to determine if pre-existing obligations with respect to specific IP exist.

##COM-DIS-VIS-CDV##

## 2.3 Summary

### KEY ELEMENTS OF THE IMPACT SECTION

Specific needs	Expected results	D & E & C measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•BFF must be spread more widely as it assists biodiversity recovery, and climate change adaptation/mitigation, benefiting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EU thematic network on biodiversity and farming established and functioning.</li> <li>• Twelve FAB NNs established</li> </ul>	<p><i>Communication</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong visual identity and versatile promotional materials for events, print/digital.</li> </ul>

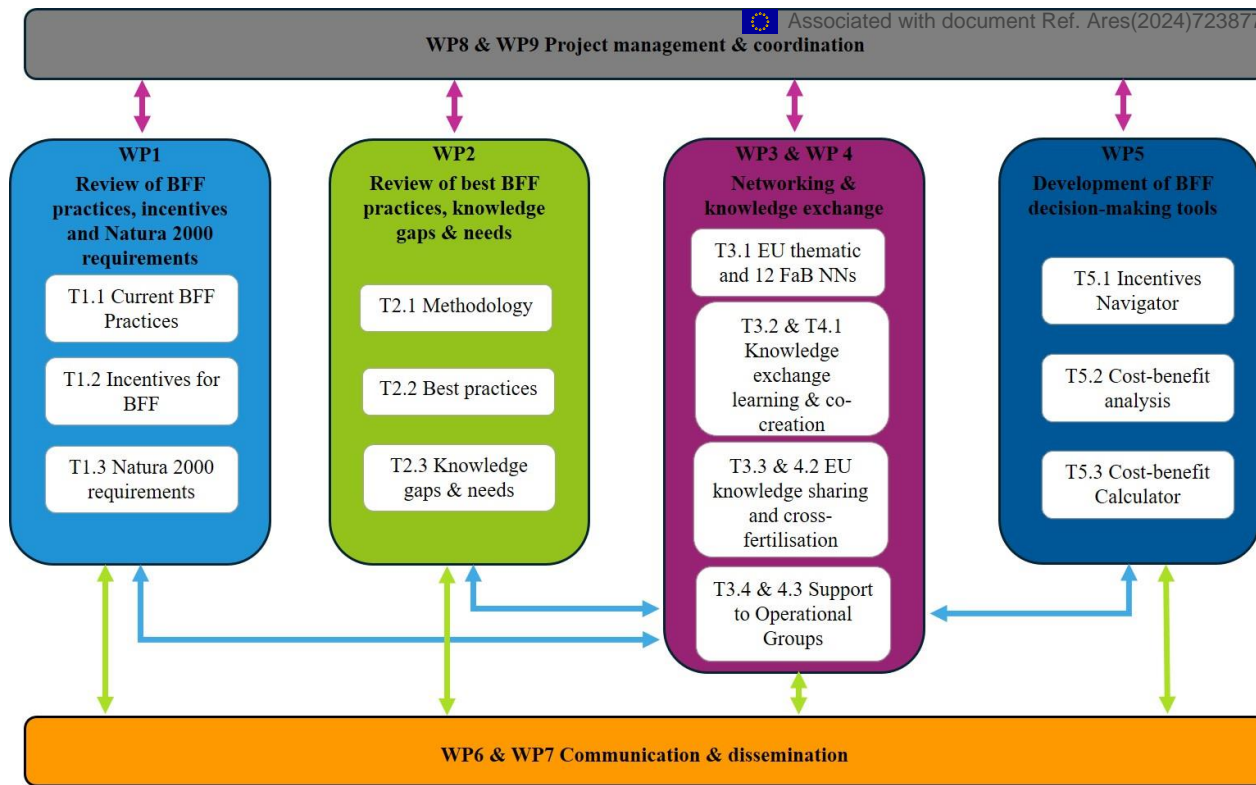
<p>farmers/foresters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Farmers/foresters must be better informed about the benefits of BFF, as, despite the benefits, many offer reluctance. Evidence that BFF benefits their business, e.g. higher yields/reduced costs is needed.</li> <li>•Existing knowledge on the mutual benefits of BFF needs improved dissemination and communication using easy-to-understand language and suitable communication channels.</li> <li>•Currently, information about BFF is fragmented and scattered. Farmers/foresters/advisors should have a one-stop shop providing them with BFF-related practical information and tools, including financial incentives and cost-benefits.</li> <li>•An EU-wide and NN on BFF is essential to catalyse knowledge exchange and provide societal recognition for BFF.</li> <li>•Policies at national level need to be clearer/more supportive.</li> </ul>	<p>and functioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Review of current BFF practices; needs of farmers/foresters, knowledge gaps related to biodiversity; public and private incentives for farmers/foresters to improve biodiversity; EU requirements for biodiversity protection in agricultural and forest areas; existing ready-to-use BFF practices and research findings.</li> <li>•Existing best practices and research findings summarised.</li> <li>•Functioning farmer friendly online tools enabling navigation through BFF public and private incentives (<i>Navigator</i>) and cost-benefit analysis of best practices (<i>Calculator</i>).</li> <li>•A range of attractive and easy-to-understand materials created and fed into existing dissemination channels.</li> <li>•Active and engaging presence in social and regular media.</li> <li>•Discussions with policy makers about policy gaps.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•High-impact social media accounts and a website to deliver accessible content to experts and non-experts, vibrant spaces for real-time updates on project activities and direct interaction with a wide audience.</li> <li>•Stimulate discourse/engagement, immersive experiences catalyse collaborative growth.</li> </ul> <p><i>Dissemination</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Workshops and events, e.g. national conferences, fairs, and farm walks. Enhance capacities of all partners for networking and sharing knowledge.</li> <li>•Knowledge transfer tools, e.g. infographics, videos, and online decision support tools.</li> <li>•Knowledge and policy recommendations disseminated via participation in events, e.g. conferences, workshops, scientific publications, policy briefs.</li> </ul> <p><i>Exploitation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Planning/monitoring to safeguard effective and timely exploitation.</li> <li>•Targeting exploitation via individual and joint exploitation plans</li> <li>•Measures to boost exploitation at EU level targeting KERs.</li> </ul>
Target Group	Outcomes	Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End users: farmers, farmers' groups &amp; foresters</li> <li>• Advisors, state and private advisory services.</li> <li>• Other AKIS actors: researchers, scientists, media, consumers &amp; NGOs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fostering &amp; sharing knowledge, innovation, &amp; digitalisation in agriculture &amp; rural areas &amp; encouraging their uptake.</li> <li>•Collection &amp; distribution of easily accessible practice-oriented knowledge, incl. existing best practices &amp; research findings, ready to be put into practice.</li> <li>•Maintenance of practical knowledge for the long-term using the main trusted dissemination channels of farmers/foresters.</li> <li>•Increased flow of practical information between farmers/foresters in the EU, taking account of differences between territories and creating spillovers.</li> <li>•Greater user acceptance of BFF solutions, increasing dissemination of knowledge by connecting actors, policies, projects, and instruments, speeding transposition of innovative solutions into practice.</li> <li>•Greater clarity of policies relating to BFF.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas related to the EU Green Deal benefit from further deployment &amp; exploitation of environmental observation data, products, &amp; “green” solutions.</li> <li>•Stakeholders, primary producers &amp; consumers, are better informed &amp; engaged thanks to effective platforms such as AKIS.</li> <li>•Greater uptake of BFF by farmers / foresters 1% annual rise of uptake.</li> <li>•Additional 0.8 m ha under BFF management.</li> <li>•Increase in farmland birds &amp; pollinators, 5-20% reduction in pesticide use over 5-10 years.</li> <li>•At least 5% of EU farmers/foresters and 1% of consumers will benefit from FarmBioNet’s learning materials and tools for 10 years after the projects ends.</li> </ul>

### 3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation

#### 3.1 Work plan and resources

The FarmBioNet work plan is organised in **nine work packages** (WPs). Each WP has a lead with the necessary expertise and a co-lead with complementary competence, combining socioeconomic and agro-ecological expertise

(for a full description of each WP see Table 3.1b). **WP1** will serve as the baseline to identify current BFF practices, BFF incentives, and Natura 2000 requirements. **WP2** will highlight the best BFF practices and focus on current knowledge gaps and needs of farmers. **WP3** and **WP4** will activate an EU multi-stakeholder network and 12 NNs to support farmers in sharing knowledge and peer-to-peer learning. **WP5** will provide cost-benefit (CB) analysis of selected BFF practices and develop two practical tools: Incentives Navigator and CB Calculator. **WP6** will define the optimal strategy for Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation, and provide capacity building for the leaders of NNs. **WP6/WP7** will maximise the project impacts through specific communication and dissemination activities targeted to different audiences. **WP8** and **WP9** will operate an efficient system for project management and will guarantee the projects smooth delivery and coordination, while meeting all requirements.



**Figure 3:** Main flows and interactions between each work package (WP) presented by different colours.

WP Task	Project timeline (months)																																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
WP1	[Blue bar]																																			
T1.1	[Blue bar]																																			
T1.2	[Blue bar]																																			
T1.3	[Blue bar]																																			
WP2	[Green bar]																																			
T2.1	[Green bar]																																			
T2.2	[Green bar]																																			
T2.3	[Green bar]																																			
WP3	[Purple bar]																																			
T3.1	[Purple bar]																																			
T3.2	[Purple bar]																																			
T3.3	[Purple bar]																																			
T3.4	[Purple bar]																																			
WP4	[Purple bar]																																			
T4.1	[Purple bar]																																			
T4.2	[Purple bar]																																			
T4.3	[Purple bar]																																			
WP5	[Dark Blue bar]																																			
T5.1	[Dark Blue bar]																																			
T5.2	[Dark Blue bar]																																			
T5.3	[Dark Blue bar]																																			
WP6	[Orange bar]																																			
T6.1	[Orange bar]																																			
T6.2	[Orange bar]																																			
T6.3	[Orange bar]																																			
WP7	[Orange bar]																																			
T7.1	[Orange bar]																																			
T7.2	[Orange bar]																																			
T7.3	[Orange bar]																																			
WP8	[Grey bar]																																			
T8.1	[Grey bar]																																			
T8.2	[Grey bar]																																			
T8.3	[Grey bar]																																			
WP9	[Grey bar]																																			
T9.1	[Grey bar]																																			
T9.2	[Grey bar]																																			
T9.3	[Grey bar]																																			
T9.4	[Grey bar]																																			
AGMs	[Dark Blue bar]																																			

**Figure 4:** Timing of the work packages (WP) and tasks (T) (Gantt Chart).

*The resulting innovative knowledge from this project will feed into the EIP-AGRI database of the EU CAP network website for broad dissemination to practitioners. End-user material will be produced in the form of a number of summaries for practitioners in the EIP common format ("practice abstracts"). The project details will also be submitted to the platform with the first deliverable submission. Guidance and templates for these practice abstracts will be available on the EU CAP network website, and practice abstracts will be uploaded via a new web-based tool. A total target number of 50 practice abstracts is foreseen for the project. Twenty practice abstracts will be delivered by M18 (D14) and an additional 30 will be delivered by M36 (D16).*

### 3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole

**The FarmBioNet consortium evolved from the work of the [EIP-AGRI Focus Group 47, "Enhancing the biodiversity on farmland through high diversity landscape features"](#), established by the EC in 2023.** Its members were appointed by the DG AGRI and RD "according to their qualifications, based on proven expertise" and "evidence of the technical and professional capacity", considering "a balance in the areas of expertise, professional capacity and experience and geographical balance". The FarmBioNet consortium comprises as many as 14 participants of this Focus Group, confirming their commitment to pursuing the EC goals on BFF.

**The FarmBioNet consortium has been consolidated on a "cross-sectorial and multi-actor approach" principle to match the project's objectives and provide disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge necessary to implement this project successfully.** The consortium aligns with the project's goals by encompassing 19 diverse participants. It comprises 4 NGOs (ECO, AVALON, ADEPT and FSH), 6 public research institutes (ILESAS, STUDIA, SFI, FIBLCH, FIBLDE and ZALF), 2 governmental organisations (TEAGASC and DHLGH), 2 universities (UFBG and UNIFI), 1 farmers' organisation (ASAJA), 1 Farm (TPA), 1 farmers' organisation and advisory service (BIOAT), 1 advisory service and SME (SUSKE) and 1 advisory service and NGO (AGRIDEA). This comprehensive composition ensures a fusion of disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise crucial for successfully executing the project's objectives, fostering a holistic approach to biodiversity conservation within agricultural landscapes and systems.

**The participating countries were carefully chosen to represent a balanced mix of European agricultural production and biogeographical regions.** The FarmBioNet consortium comprises 19 partners representing 13 countries: 11 EU MS (AT, BG, DE, ES, HR, IE, IT, NL, RO, SI and SK), SER and CH. They cover diverse production types/systems (and holding sizes), including arable crops, grassland, fruit, wine, olive and production of speciality crops, mixed crop-livestock systems, dairy and beef cattle farming, pig, poultry, sheep and goat farming, etc. The 12 FarmBioNet countries cover the EU-27 [53% utilised agricultural area](#), [52% permanent grassland](#) and [61% the agricultural area in the NATURA 2000 \(including natural grassland\)](#) and as many as 8 out of 11 European biogeographic regions.

**The consortium members have complementary expertise and skills and have the knowledge and infrastructure to implement this project.** All consortium participants have a proven track record in their field, either in (applied) research or networking competencies in various national and international participatory research projects related to BFF. The participants have strong references in implementing EC-funded projects. Four (TEAGASC, UNIFI, FIBLCH and ZALF) have led Horizon projects, while 12 (UFBG, ECO, ILESAS, STUDIA, TPA, BIOAT, SFI, AGRIDEA, FIBLDE, ADEPT, ASAJA and FSH) participated in their implementation. DHLGH and ADEPT have both led several LIFE projects, while BIOAT has led EIP-AGRI projects. UNIFI is the UNESCO chair on Agricultural Heritage Landscapes.

**FarmBioNet does not conduct fundamental lab-based research, so access to critical infrastructure is less relevant for this project.** Thus, all partners involved in the project have access to the infrastructure required to collect and analyse data. Several partners have experience with open science practices and tools for collecting and storing on-farm and personal data in ways that comply with GDPR (e.g., use of own servers).

**The consortium is well-balanced regarding (1) expertise and experience, (2) type of participant and (3) gender.** The consortium partners represent farmers (individual farmer(s) and farmers associations), advisory services, researchers, and knowledge transfer specialists. In Ireland, TEAGASC combines all these groups in one organisation. This explains the relatively high involvement of TEAGASC. The partners from the research institutions are from a wide range of disciplines, including social sciences and humanities, economics, and ecology, making it possible to connect to a broad range of knowledge and scientific supports. Nine out of 19 participant coordinators are women, contributing to a balanced gender composition of the consortium.

**All WP leaders are highly competent to lead the WPs assigned to them, and each participant has a clear role and adequate resources.** TEAGASC leads three WPs. WP1 is its core business – analysis of farming practices, incentives, and requirements. The core of WP8 and WP9 is project management and coordination – tasks that

TEAGASC has mastered (66 active Horizon 2020/Horizon Europe projects, 11 of which are coordinated by TEAGASC). ZALF oversees WP2 due to its excellent research capacities and similar experiences gained in related Horizon projects. SUSKE leads WP3 and WP4 on networking because of its vast expertise in coordination of one of the largest European BFF networks, involving 500 farmers. STUDIA oversees WP5 on the economic analysis because it is its core expertise, gained among others, in a Horizon project on forest ecosystem services. FSH leads WP6 and WP7 on communication and dissemination because of its vast experience undertaking such activities, including over 30 Horizon projects. A co-leader is assigned to assist the WP leader in each WP. To strengthen the forestry dimension of the project, the consortium includes a forestry university (UFBG) and a forestry research institute (SFI). All participants have been provided with adequate resources to fulfil their assigned roles. The workload is equally distributed among partners, and each participant has a clear role based on their primary expertise, which is summarised in the table below:

**Table 3.2:** Roles and expertise of participants

No	Participant	Role in the project			Main expertise						
		WPL	WPCL	WPP	BFF	AR	AS	Net	KT	EA	CO
1	TEAGASC*	WP1, WP8-WP9	WP6 WP7	All	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
2	UFBG*			All	+	+		+	+		
3	ECO*		WP3, WP8 & WP9	All	+	+		+		+	+
4	ILESAS*			WP1 - WP3, & WP5 - WP9	+	+		+	+		
5	STUDIA	WP5		WP2 - WP9	+	+		+	+	+	+
6	TPA			WP4 - WP9	+			+	+	+	+
7	BIOAT*			All	+		+	+	+		+
8	SFI*			All	+	+		+	+	+	
9	SUSKE	WP3, WP4		All	+		+	+	+		+
10	AGRIDEA*			All	+			+	+		+
11	DHLGH			WP1, WP2, WP5 - WP9	+	+	+	+	+		+
12	UNIFI*		WP2	All	+	+		+	+		
13	ASAJA*			All	+			+			+
14	AVALON*		WP5	All	+	+		+	+	+	+
15	FIBLCH			WP5, - WP9	+	+	+		+	+	+
16	ADEPT*		WP4	All	+		+	+	+		+
17	FSH	WP6, WP7		WP5 - WP9				+	+		
18	FIBLDE*			WP2 - WP9	+		+	+	+		
19	ZALF	WP2	WP1	WP1, WP2 & WP5 - WP9	+	+	+			+	

\* National FaB network leader; **WPL**=WP leader; **WPCL**=WP co-leader; **WPP**=WP participant  
**BFF**=biodiversity-friendly farming system; **AR**=applied research; **AS**=advisory service; **Net**=networking/OG participation;  
**KT**= knowledge transfer; **EA**=economic analysis; **CO**=work with consumers

##CON-SOR-CS## ##PRJ-MGT-PM##

**International Organisations (associated partners):**

Switzerland has extensive experience with the implementation of BFF measures, and it is one of the most advanced European countries regarding public and private support of BFF. It is useful and beneficial for EU countries to learn from the experience Switzerland has gained under its different agricultural policy system. Partner 10 (AGRIDEA) and Partner 15 (FIBLCH) are well connected nationally and internationally. AGRIDEA occupies a central position in Switzerland's agricultural knowledge system. As a link between science, education, advisory services and practice, AGRIDEA has experience in networking various AKIS stakeholders. Other core competencies of AGRIDEA are the training and further education of agricultural advisors, methodological skills, coordination of networks, promotion of cooperation between actors in the agricultural knowledge system, and the processing of specialised knowledge in

a language appropriate to target groups. FIBLCH have access to established national and international knowledge platforms and expertise relating to organic farming and have an extensive farmland biodiversity network.

AGRIDEA will participate in all project activities and contribute to all WPs. FIBLCH will contribute to WP 5-WP9 with time spent mostly on dissemination and Communication.

The two associated partners will contribute to the project with their own funding, which come from the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation in Switzerland.

AGRIDEA: total allocated budget = €202,039.38 (including €173,289.38 personnel costs).

FIBLCH: total allocated budget = €83,715 (including €58,590 personnel costs).

All figures include 25% overhead.

## 4. Ethics self-assessment

### 4.1 Ethical dimension of the objectives, methodology and likely impact

The FarmBioNet consortium includes experienced researchers and practitioners, including in the social sciences, across all partners who are cognizant of the ethical issues involved in their work with human participants.

Key ethical issues in FarmBioNet include:

- Research involving human participants
- Collection and processing of personal data
- Further processing of previously collected personal data

Human participants are involved in various roles as set out in the proposal, including: as a researcher; as a participant in one or more case studies, surveys, or workshops; and as a stakeholder involved in knowledge exchange or project dissemination. FarmBioNet will use data provided by stakeholders in workshops, interviews and surveys that may classify as personal information.

**Collection and processing of personal data:** Collected data will include a survey of >100 participants, workshop and consultation proceedings and a review of initiatives related to BFF and >30 in-depth case studies. This involves the collection of large amounts of quantitative and qualitative data, including personal data, as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and confidential data collected through qualitative research methods. Qualitative data will be collected through (online) surveys, (face-to-face or telephone) interviews, workshops, and observations. Data will only be collected from participants that have willingly volunteered to take part in the research. Data that will be collected in work plan include: Personal data (e.g. name, age, gender, educational and socio-economic background); Agricultural practices data (e.g. data on changes in agricultural practices and related behaviours); and Data on social and institutional aspects of agriculture (e.g. political framework conditions, socially-shared understandings of biodiversity friendly farming practices). Although sensitive personal data, including health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction may manifest in researchers' interaction and engagement with participants, these data are not relevant for FarmBioNet and will not be recorded.

### 4.2 Compliance with ethical principles and relevant legislations

The Teagasc team has experience producing ethical guidelines for surveys and interviews on human participants and processing of personal data in relation to the Horizon projects. Most partners are trained in research ethics, have contributed to the development of ethical guidelines in previous Horizon and LIFE projects and are familiar with relevant regulations, including the EU's GDPR. Where required, ethics training and support will be provided to partners.

#### **Ethical considerations regarding participating researchers**

The health of participating researchers is protected by the employment regulation of their respective organisation as well as relevant national legislation. Existing strong relationships between partners fosters an environment where partners can share and collectively or bilaterally (e.g. with Coordinator) address problems or concerns, including

ethical considerations. The FarmBioNet consortium are aware that cross-national comparative case study research involving teams of researchers from different social and cultural backgrounds can present challenges regarding the maintenance of high standards of integrity, responsibility and accountability. These challenges will be addressed, which will include guidelines on the procedures to identify and recruit research participants, and ensure that the ethical standards and guidelines of Horizon Europe will be applied throughout the project. Information Sheets, Informed Consent Forms and Data Privacy Statements will be developed in advance of data collection. Every care will be taken to treat all participants, particularly those from vulnerable groups, with respect and sensitivity and all possible efforts will be made to promote their autonomy. Attention will be made to ensure that all participants are provided information about the project and give their consent in a way that is suitable for their cultural, linguistic and cognitive level. Formal consent and data protection frameworks will be put in place. Measures include anonymisation of data to protect participants' privacy; informed consent; and responsible sampling during recruitment.

*Anonymisation of data:* All collected data, qualitative and quantitative, will be anonymised upon collection, prior to analysis. Each participant will be given an identification number and all records connecting original respondents to chosen identification numbers will never be published and will be stored for a maximum period of 5 years.

A detailed information sheet about the project, to include its aims, approach, partners and programme of work will be shared with all potential participants. We will demonstrate that participants freely consented to the processing of their personal data. Participation in any aspect of FarmBioNet will be voluntary and participants can discontinue their involvement at any stage. All participants will be required to sign an Informed Consent Form that adheres to EU Ethics Guidelines for Social Research and explains any potential risks. To maximise the impact of FarmBioNet, project partners will coordinate dissemination and exploitation activities with policy-makers, academics, businesses, NGOs and national agencies. Transdisciplinary cooperation can raise ethical concerns around issues such as integrity, responsibility and accountability. These issues will be given due consideration and responsible communication, dissemination and exploitation guidelines will be detailed in the Communication and Dissemination Plan. Personal details and consent forms will be retained for 3 years following the study. All data collected will be securely stored in anonymised form for 5 years. Analogue data will be digitalised, e.g. by processing raw data into (translated) interview transcripts, and stored on a secure server. Researchers will be strongly advised to encrypt all sensitive data using public key encryption software and related guidelines for researchers will be provided.

*Other ethical considerations:* The FarmBioNet consortium is committed to minimise risks and maximise benefits for direct participants as well as for wider society. This includes the widespread dissemination of research findings made freely available to a range of groups, directly or through social and traditional media and other communications avenues. FarmBioNet researchers will endeavour to create meaningful, reciprocal and lasting relations with the people, organisations and initiatives they will engage with during the empirical research. Ideally, spin-off initiatives will emerge and new projects will be inspired and supported as a result of our work.

Compliance with the ethical principles and the applicable EU, international, and national laws for the ethics issues identified in the Ethics Summary Report and any additional ethics issues that may emerge in the course of the grant, will be ensured. For any applicable ethics issue, the guidance provided in the European Commission Ethics Self-Assessment Guidelines will be rigorously followed.

**ANNEX 2**

**ESTIMATED BUDGET (LUMP SUM BREAKDOWN) FOR THE ACTION**

Estimated EU contribution											
Estimated eligible lump sum contributions (per work package)											Maximum grant amount <sup>1</sup>
	WP1 Analysis of the state of current biodiversity-friendly farming (BFF) practices	WP2 Collection of research findings and best practices	WP3 Networking and knowledge exchange – first phase	WP4 Networking and knowledge exchange – second phase	WP5 Development of BFF decision-making toolbox	WP6 Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication – first phase	WP7 Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication – second phase	WP8 Coordinating, networking, and data management – first phase	WP9 Coordinating, networking, and data management – second phase	WP10 Ethics requirements	
Forms of funding	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k = a + b + c + d + e + f + g + h + i + j
1 - TEAGASC	34 260.00	25 124.00	48 552.50	42 842.50	9 707.00	24 275.00	29 272.00	131 845.00	126 970.00	0.00	472 848.00
2 - UF	750.00	500.00	21 312.50	15 312.50	500.00	6 250.00	6 250.00	2 750.00	1 625.00	0.00	55 250.00
3 - ECOLOGICA	1 687.50	2 250.00	61 937.50	57 312.50	26 437.50	16 000.00	15 375.00	19 812.50	5 062.50	0.00	205 875.00
4 - ILE SAS	1 031.63	687.75	25 945.00	20 067.50	687.75	7 188.75	7 188.75	2 937.75	1 812.75	0.00	67 547.63
5 - STUDIA	5 637.00	19 729.50	9 395.00	10 395.00	46 975.00	21 290.00	23 790.00	10 137.00	7 887.00	0.00	155 235.50
6 - TDPA	0.00	0.00	15 096.25	15 929.31	327.75	4 527.50	4 277.50	2 905.50	1 780.50	0.00	44 844.31
7 - BIO AUSTRIA	0.00	5 361.00	49 987.50	42 052.50	893.50	15 185.00	15 185.00	4 037.00	2 912.00	0.00	135 613.50
8 - SFI	1 317.75	4 392.50	38 256.25	30 471.25	878.50	9 392.50	9 392.50	3 128.50	2 003.50	0.00	99 233.25
9 - SuskeConsulting	2 491.88	830.63	72 137.50	73 137.50	830.63	15 056.25	14 556.25	3 911.25	2 786.25	0.00	185 738.14
10 - DHLGH	1 000.00	1 000.00	3 750.00	14 750.00	1 000.00	8 750.00	11 125.00	1 250.00	1 125.00	0.00	43 750.00
11 - UNIFI	763.50	24 432.00	51 497.50	39 136.25	763.50	13 135.00	13 885.00	17 040.50	3 415.50	0.00	164 068.75
12 - ASAJA	696.38	6 963.75	52 095.00	40 167.50	1 392.75	7 967.75	7 967.75	1 634.75	1 517.75	0.00	120 403.38
13 - AVALON	3 075.00	12 300.00	67 187.50	46 687.50	54 325.00	17 000.00	16 500.00	10 425.00	3 175.00	0.00	230 675.00
14 - ADEPT	2 747.50	4 710.00	51 012.50	36 125.00	785.00	12 100.00	10 350.00	4 605.00	3 480.00	0.00	125 915.00
15 - FSH	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10 812.50	117 637.50	114 812.50	30 703.13	29 778.13	0.00	303 743.76
16 - FIBLDE	0.00	0.00	55 637.50	25 603.75	838.75	15 637.50	16 315.00	2 927.50	2 802.50	0.00	119 762.50
17 - ZALF	46 875.00	65 625.00	0.00	0.00	5 625.00	25 000.00	25 000.00	7 875.00	7 250.00	0.00	183 250.00
18 - AGRIDEA											
19 - FIBLCH											
<b>Σ consortium</b>	<b>102 333.14</b>	<b>173 906.13</b>	<b>623 800.00</b>	<b>509 990.56</b>	<b>162 780.13</b>	<b>336 392.75</b>	<b>341 242.25</b>	<b>257 925.38</b>	<b>205 383.38</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2 713 753.72</b>

<sup>1</sup> The 'maximum grant amount' is the maximum grant amount fixed in the grant agreement (on the basis of the sum of the beneficiaries' lump sum shares for the work packages).

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**University of Forestry (UF)**, PIC 998170838, established in KLIMENT OCHRIDSKI BLVD 10, Sofia 1756, Bulgaria,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

**the coordinator** to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**EKOLOSKI INSTITUT ECOLOGICA \* Environmental Institute ECOLOGICA (ECOLOGICA)**, PIC 932919132, established in Zeleni dol 17, Zagreb 10000, Croatia,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY OF THE SLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, public research institution (ILE SAS), PIC 999903937, established in Stefanikova 3, BRATISLAVA 814 99, Slovakia,**

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet ('the Agreement')**

**between TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) and the European Research Executive Agency (REA) ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),**

**and mandates**

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**STUDIA-Schlierbach Studienzentrum für internationale Analysen (STUDIA)**, PIC 948751860, established in Panoramaweg 1, Schlierbach 4553, Austria,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

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For the beneficiary

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**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**TENUTA DI PAGANICO SOCIETA AGRICOLASPA (TDPA)**, PIC 905806371, established in VIA DELLA STAZIONE 10, CIVITELLA PAGANICO 58045, Italy,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

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**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**BIO AUSTRIA - VEREIN ZUR FORDERUNG DES BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAUS (BIO AUSTRIA)**, PIC 899879574, established in AUF DER GUGL 3/3, LINZ 4021, Austria,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

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For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**GOZDARSKI INSTITUT SLOVENIJE (SFI)**, PIC 997626765, established in VECNA POT 2, LJUBLJANA 1000, Slovenia,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**WOLFGANG SUSKE (SuskeConsulting)**, PIC 898820916, established in HOLLANDSTRASSE 20/11, VIENNA 1020, Austria,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HERITAGE (DHLGH), PIC** 928585269, established in CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN D01W6X0, Ireland,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE (UNIFI)**, PIC 999895789, established in Piazza San Marco 4, Florence 50121, Italy,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**ASOCIACION AGRARIA JOVENES AGRICULTORES DE SEVILLA (ASAJA)**, PIC 921134117, established in AV. SAN FRANCISCO JAVIER 9 - TERCERA PLANTA, SEVILLA 41018, Spain,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**STICHTING AVALON FOUNDATION (AVALON)**, PIC 932502032, established in VAN BURMANIAWEI 8, IENS 8733 EP, Netherlands,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**FUNDATIA ADEPT TRANSILVANIA (ADEPT)**, PIC 951622575, established in STREET VIITORULUI NR.38 AP. LOT IV, SACELE 505600, Romania,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**UDRUZENJE ZA PREDUZETNISTVO I INOVACIJE FOODSCALE HUB (FSH)**, PIC 899388754, established in NARODNOG FRONTA 73, NOVI SAD 21000, Serbia,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**FORSCHUNGSINSTITUT FUR BIOLOGISCHEN LANDBAU DEUTSCHLAND EV (FIBLDE)**, PIC 970548439, established in KASSELER STRASSE 1a, FRANKFURT AM MAIN 60486, Germany,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between** TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC) **and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

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SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

**ANNEX 3**

**ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES**

**LEIBNIZ-ZENTRUM FUER AGRARLANDSCHAFTSFORSCHUNG (ZALF) e.V. (ZALF)**,  
PIC 999465885, established in Eberswalder Str. 84, MUENCHEBERG 15374, Germany,

**hereby agrees**

**to become beneficiary**

**in Agreement No 101182942 — FarmBioNet** ('the Agreement')

**between TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TEAGASC)**  
**and the European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting  
authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

**and mandates**

**the coordinator** to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement,  
in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in  
accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE ACTION FOR REPORTING PERIOD [NUMBER]

EU contribution												
Eligible lump sum contributions (per work package)												Requested EU contribution
WP1 [name]	WP2 [name]	WP3 [name]	WP4 [name]	WP5 [name]	WP6 [name]	WP7 [name]	WP8 [name]	WP9 [name]	WP10 [name]	WP [XX]		
[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[ Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	
Forms of funding												
Status of completion	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	PARTIALLY COMPLETED	PARTIALLY COMPLETED	COMPLETED	NOT COMPLETED	
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	$l = a + b + c + d + e + f + g + h + i + j + k$
1 – [short name beneficiary]												
1.1 – [short name affiliated entity]												
2 – [short name beneficiary]												
2.1 – [short name affiliated entity]												
X – [short name associated partner]												
Total consortium												

The consortium hereby confirms that:

The information provided is complete, reliable and true.

The lump sum contributions declared are eligible (in particular, the work packages have been completed and the work has been properly implemented and/or the results were achieved; see Article 6).

The proper implementation of the action/achievement of the results can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Articles 19, 21 and 25).

## **ANNEX 5**

### **SPECIFIC RULES**

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY (— ARTICLE 13)**

##### **Sensitive information with security recommendation**

Sensitive information with a security recommendation must comply with the additional requirements imposed by the granting authority.

Before starting the action tasks concerned, the beneficiaries must have obtained all approvals or other mandatory documents needed for implementing the task. The documents must be kept on file and be submitted upon request by the coordinator to the granting authority. If they are not in English, they must be submitted together with an English summary.

For requirements restricting disclosure or dissemination, the information must be handled in accordance with the recommendation and may be disclosed or disseminated only after written approval from the granting authority.

##### **EU classified information**

If EU classified information is used or generated by the action, it must be treated in accordance with the security classification guide (SCG) and security aspect letter (SAL) set out in Annex 1 and Decision 2015/444<sup>1</sup> and its implementing rules — until it is declassified.

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

Action tasks involving EU classified information may be subcontracted only with prior explicit written approval from the granting authority and only to entities established in an EU Member State or in a non-EU country with a security of information agreement with the EU (or an administrative arrangement with the Commission).

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

#### **ETHICS (— ARTICLE 14)**

##### **Ethics and research integrity**

The beneficiaries must carry out the action in compliance with:

- ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity)

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

and

- applicable EU, international and national law, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

No funding can be granted, within or outside the EU, for activities that are prohibited in all Member States. No funding can be granted in a Member State for an activity which is forbidden in that Member State.

The beneficiaries must pay particular attention to the principle of proportionality, the right to privacy, the right to the protection of personal data, the right to the physical and mental integrity of persons, the right to non-discrimination, the need to ensure protection of the environment and high levels of human health protection.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the activities under the action have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the activities under the action do not:

- aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes
- intend to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such modifications heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed)
- intend to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer, or
- lead to the destruction of human embryos (for example, for obtaining stem cells).

Activities involving research on human embryos or human embryonic stem cells may be carried out only if:

- they are set out in Annex 1 or
- the coordinator has obtained explicit approval (in writing) from the granting authority.

In addition, the beneficiaries must respect the fundamental principle of research integrity — as set out in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity<sup>2</sup>.

This implies compliance with the following principles:

- reliability in ensuring the quality of research reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources
- honesty in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair and unbiased way
- respect for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment

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<sup>2</sup> European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies).

- accountability for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts

and means that beneficiaries must ensure that persons carrying out research tasks follow the good research practices including ensuring, where possible, openness, reproducibility and traceability and refrain from the research integrity violations described in the Code.

Activities raising ethical issues must comply with the additional requirements formulated by the ethics panels (including after checks, reviews or audits; see Article 25).

Before starting an action task raising ethical issues, the beneficiaries must have obtained all approvals or other mandatory documents needed for implementing the task, notably from any (national or local) ethics committee or other bodies such as data protection authorities.

The documents must be kept on file and be submitted upon request by the coordinator to the granting authority. If they are not in English, they must be submitted together with an English summary, which shows that the documents cover the action tasks in question and includes the conclusions of the committee or authority concerned (if any).

## **VALUES (— ARTICLE 14)**

### **Gender mainstreaming**

The beneficiaries must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action and, where applicable, in line with the gender equality plan. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

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

### **Definitions**

Access rights — Rights to use results or background.

Dissemination — The public disclosure of the results by appropriate means, other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results, including by scientific publications in any medium.

Exploit(ation) — The use of results in further research and innovation activities other than those covered by the action concerned, including among other things, commercial exploitation such as developing, creating, manufacturing and marketing a product or process, creating and providing a service, or in standardisation activities.

Fair and reasonable conditions — Appropriate conditions, including possible financial terms or royalty-free conditions, taking into account the specific circumstances of the request for access, for example the actual or potential value of the results or background to which access is requested and/or the scope, duration or other characteristics of the exploitation envisaged.

FAIR principles — ‘findability’, ‘accessibility’, ‘interoperability’ and ‘reusability’.

Open access — Online access to research outputs provided free of charge to the end-user.

Open science — An approach to the scientific process based on open cooperative work, tools and diffusing knowledge.

Research data management — The process within the research lifecycle that includes the organisation, storage, preservation, security, quality assurance, allocation of persistent identifiers (PIDs) and rules and procedures for sharing of data including licensing.

Research outputs — Results to which access can be given in the form of scientific publications, data or other engineered results and processes such as software, algorithms, protocols, models, workflows and electronic notebooks.

### **Scope of the obligations**

For this section, references to ‘beneficiary’ or ‘beneficiaries’ do not include affiliated entities (if any).

### **Agreement on background — Background free from restrictions**

The beneficiaries must identify in a written agreement the background as needed for implementing the action or for exploiting its results.

Where the call conditions restrict control due to strategic interests reasons, background that is subject to control or other restrictions by a country (or entity from a country) which is not one of the eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions and that impact the exploitation of the results (i.e. would make the exploitation of the results subject to control or restrictions) must not be used and must be explicitly excluded in the agreement on background — unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority.

### **Results free from restrictions**

Where the call conditions restrict control due to strategic interests reasons, the beneficiaries must ensure that the results of the action are not subject to control or other restrictions by a country (or entity from a country) which is not one of the eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions — unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority.

### **Ownership of results**

Results are owned by the beneficiaries that generate them.

However, two or more beneficiaries own results jointly if:

- they have jointly generated them and
- it is not possible to:
  - establish the respective contribution of each beneficiary, or
  - separate them for the purpose of applying for, obtaining or maintaining their protection.

The joint owners must agree — in writing — on the allocation and terms of exercise of their joint ownership (‘joint ownership agreement’), to ensure compliance with their obligations under this Agreement.

Unless otherwise agreed in the joint ownership agreement or consortium agreement, each joint owner may grant non-exclusive licences to third parties to exploit the jointly-owned results (without any right to sub-license), if the other joint owners are given:

- at least 45 days advance notice and
- fair and reasonable compensation.

The joint owners may agree — in writing — to apply another regime than joint ownership.

If third parties (including employees and other personnel) may claim rights to the results, the beneficiary concerned must ensure that those rights can be exercised in a manner compatible with its obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must indicate the owner(s) of the results (results ownership list) in the final periodic report.

### **Protection of results**

Beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must adequately protect their results — for an appropriate period and with appropriate territorial coverage — if protection is possible and justified, taking into account all relevant considerations, including the prospects for commercial exploitation, the legitimate interests of the other beneficiaries and any other legitimate interests.

### **Exploitation of results**

Beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — use their best efforts to exploit their results directly or to have them exploited indirectly by another entity, in particular through transfer or licensing.

If, despite a beneficiary's best efforts, the results are not exploited within one year after the end of the action, the beneficiaries must (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the granting authority) use the Horizon Results Platform to find interested parties to exploit the results.

If results are incorporated in a standard, the beneficiaries must (unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority or unless it is impossible) ask the standardisation body to include the funding statement (see Article 17) in (information related to) the standard.

### ***Additional exploitation obligations***

Where the call conditions impose additional exploitation obligations (including obligations linked to the restriction of participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons), the beneficiaries must comply with them — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Where the call conditions impose additional exploitation obligations in case of a public emergency, the beneficiaries must (if requested by the granting authority) grant for a limited period of time specified in the request, non-exclusive licences — under fair and reasonable conditions — to their results to legal entities that need the results to address the public emergency and commit to rapidly and broadly exploit the resulting products and services at fair and reasonable conditions. This provision applies up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

### Additional information obligation relating to standards

Where the call conditions impose additional information obligations relating to possible standardisation, the beneficiaries must — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — inform the granting authority, if the results could reasonably be expected to contribute to European or international standards.

### **Transfer and licensing of results**

#### Transfer of ownership

The beneficiaries may transfer ownership of their results, provided this does not affect compliance with their obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their obligations under the Agreement regarding their results are passed on to the new owner and that this new owner has the obligation to pass them on in any subsequent transfer.

Moreover, they must inform the other beneficiaries with access rights of the transfer at least 45 days in advance (or less if agreed in writing), unless agreed otherwise in writing for specifically identified third parties including affiliated entities or unless impossible under the applicable law. This notification must include sufficient information on the new owner to enable the beneficiaries concerned to assess the effects on their access rights. The beneficiaries may object within 30 days of receiving notification (or less if agreed in writing), if they can show that the transfer would adversely affect their access rights. In this case, the transfer may not take place until agreement has been reached between the beneficiaries concerned.

#### Granting licences

The beneficiaries may grant licences to their results (or otherwise give the right to exploit them), including on an exclusive basis, provided this does not affect compliance with their obligations.

Exclusive licences for results may be granted only if all the other beneficiaries concerned have waived their access rights.

#### Granting authority right to object to transfers or licensing — Horizon Europe actions

Where the call conditions in Horizon Europe actions provide for the right to object to transfers or licensing, the granting authority may — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — object to a transfer of ownership or the exclusive licensing of results, if:

- the beneficiaries which generated the results have received funding under the grant
- it is to a legal entity established in a non-EU country not associated with Horizon Europe, and
- the granting authority considers that the transfer or licence is not in line with EU interests.

Beneficiaries that intend to transfer ownership or grant an exclusive licence must formally notify the granting authority before the intended transfer or licensing takes place and:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the new owner or licensee and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or licence on EU interests, in particular regarding competitiveness as well as consistency with ethical principles and security considerations.

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the granting authority decides to object to a transfer or exclusive licence, it must formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information it has requested).

No transfer or licensing may take place in the following cases:

- pending the granting authority decision, within the period set out above
- if the granting authority objects
- until the conditions are complied with, if the granting authority objection comes with conditions.

A beneficiary may formally notify a request to waive the right to object regarding intended transfers or grants to a specifically identified third party, if measures safeguarding EU interests are in place. If the granting authority agrees, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

#### Granting authority right to object to transfers or licensing — Euratom actions

Where the call conditions in Euratom actions provide for the right to object to transfers or licensing, the granting authority may — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — object to a transfer of ownership or the exclusive or non-exclusive licensing of results, if:

- the beneficiaries which generated the results have received funding under the grant
- it is to a legal entity established in a non-EU country not associated to the Euratom Research and Training Programme 2021-2025 and
- the granting authority considers that the transfer or licence is not in line with the EU interests.

Beneficiaries that intend to transfer ownership or grant a licence must formally notify the granting authority before the intended transfer or licensing takes place and:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the results, the new owner or licensee and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or licence on EU interests, in particular regarding competitiveness as well as consistency with ethical principles and security considerations (including the defence interests of the EU Member States under Article 24 of the Euratom Treaty).

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the granting authority decides to object to a transfer or licence, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

No transfer or licensing may take place in the following cases:

- pending the granting authority decision, within the period set out above
- if the granting authority objects
- until the conditions are complied with, if the granting authority objection comes with conditions.

A beneficiary may formally notify a request to waive the right to object regarding intended transfers or grants to a specifically identified third party, if measures safeguarding EU interests are in place. If the granting authority agrees, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

*Limitations to transfers and licensing due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons of the EU and its Member States*

Where the call conditions restrict participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons, the beneficiaries may not transfer ownership of their results or grant licences to third parties which are established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) — unless they have requested and received prior approval by the granting authority.

The request must:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the new owner or licensee and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or license on the strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States.

The granting authority may request additional information.

**Access rights to results and background**

*Exercise of access rights — Waiving of access rights — No sub-licensing*

Requests to exercise access rights and the waiver of access rights must be in writing.

Unless agreed otherwise in writing with the beneficiary granting access, access rights do not include the right to sub-license.

If a beneficiary is no longer involved in the action, this does not affect its obligations to grant access.

If a beneficiary defaults on its obligations, the beneficiaries may agree that that beneficiary no longer has access rights.

### Access rights for implementing the action

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — on a royalty-free basis — to background needed to implement their own tasks under the action, unless the beneficiary that holds the background has — before acceding to the Agreement —:

- informed the other beneficiaries that access to its background is subject to restrictions, or
- agreed with the other beneficiaries that access would not be on a royalty-free basis.

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — on a royalty-free basis — to results needed for implementing their own tasks under the action.

### Access rights for exploiting the results

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — under fair and reasonable conditions — to results needed for exploiting their results.

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — under fair and reasonable conditions — to background needed for exploiting their results, unless the beneficiary that holds the background has — before acceding to the Agreement — informed the other beneficiaries that access to its background is subject to restrictions.

Requests for access must be made — unless agreed otherwise in writing — up to one year after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

### Access rights for entities under the same control

Unless agreed otherwise in writing by the beneficiaries, access to results and, subject to the restrictions referred to above (if any), background must also be granted — under fair and reasonable conditions — to entities that:

- are established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country
- are under the direct or indirect control of another beneficiary, or under the same direct or indirect control as that beneficiary, or directly or indirectly controlling that beneficiary and
- need the access to exploit the results of that beneficiary.

Unless agreed otherwise in writing, such requests for access must be made by the entity directly to the beneficiary concerned.

Requests for access must be made — unless agreed otherwise in writing — up to one year after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

### Access rights for the granting authority, EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies and national authorities to results for policy purposes — Horizon Europe actions

In Horizon Europe actions, the beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must grant access to their results — on a royalty-free basis — to the granting authority, EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies for developing, implementing and monitoring EU policies or programmes. Such access rights do not extend to beneficiaries' background.

Such access rights are limited to non-commercial and non-competitive use.

For actions under the cluster ‘Civil Security for Society’, such access rights also extend to national authorities of EU Member States for developing, implementing and monitoring their policies or programmes in this area. In this case, access is subject to a bilateral agreement to define specific conditions ensuring that:

- the access rights will be used only for the intended purpose and
- appropriate confidentiality obligations are in place.

Moreover, the requesting national authority or EU institution, body, office or agency (including the granting authority) must inform all other national authorities of such a request.

*Access rights for the granting authority, Euratom institutions, funding bodies or the Joint Undertaking Fusion for Energy — Euratom actions*

In Euratom actions, the beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must grant access to their results — on a royalty-free basis — to the granting authority, Euratom institutions, funding bodies or the Joint Undertaking Fusion for Energy for developing, implementing and monitoring Euratom policies and programmes or for compliance with obligations assumed through international cooperation with non-EU countries and international organisations.

Such access rights include the right to authorise third parties to use the results in public procurement and the right to sub-license and are limited to non-commercial and non-competitive use.

*Additional access rights*

Where the call conditions impose additional access rights, the beneficiaries must comply with them.

**COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION, OPEN SCIENCE AND VISIBILITY (— ARTICLE 17)**

**Dissemination**

*Dissemination of results*

The beneficiaries must disseminate their results as soon as feasible, in a publicly available format, subject to any restrictions due to the protection of intellectual property, security rules or legitimate interests.

A beneficiary that intends to disseminate its results must give at least 15 days advance notice to the other beneficiaries (unless agreed otherwise), together with sufficient information on the results it will disseminate.

Any other beneficiary may object within (unless agreed otherwise) 15 days of receiving notification, if it can show that its legitimate interests in relation to the results or background would be significantly harmed. In such cases, the results may not be disseminated unless appropriate steps are taken to safeguard those interests.

*Additional dissemination obligations*

Where the call conditions impose additional dissemination obligations, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

## Open Science

### Open science: open access to scientific publications

The beneficiaries must ensure open access to peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to their results. In particular, they must ensure that:

- at the latest at the time of publication, a machine-readable electronic copy of the published version or the final peer-reviewed manuscript accepted for publication, is deposited in a trusted repository for scientific publications
- immediate open access is provided to the deposited publication via the repository, under the latest available version of the Creative Commons Attribution International Public Licence (CC BY) or a licence with equivalent rights; for monographs and other long-text formats, the licence may exclude commercial uses and derivative works (e.g. CC BY-NC, CC BY-ND) and
- information is given via the repository about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to validate the conclusions of the scientific publication.

Beneficiaries (or authors) must retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with the open access requirements.

Metadata of deposited publications must be open under a Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent, in line with the FAIR principles (in particular machine-actionable) and provide information at least about the following: publication (author(s), title, date of publication, publication venue); Horizon Europe or Euratom funding; grant project name, acronym and number; licensing terms; persistent identifiers for the publication, the authors involved in the action and, if possible, for their organisations and the grant. Where applicable, the metadata must include persistent identifiers for any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to validate the conclusions of the publication.

Only publication fees in full open access venues for scientific publications are eligible for reimbursement.

### Open science: research data management

The beneficiaries must manage the digital research data generated in the action ('data') responsibly, in line with the FAIR principles and by taking all of the following actions:

- establish a data management plan ('DMP') (and regularly update it)
- as soon as possible and within the deadlines set out in the DMP, deposit the data in a trusted repository; if required in the call conditions, this repository must be federated in the EOSC in compliance with EOSC requirements
- as soon as possible and within the deadlines set out in the DMP, ensure open access — via the repository — to the deposited data, under the latest available version of the Creative Commons Attribution International Public License (CC BY) or Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or a licence/dedication with equivalent rights, following the principle 'as open as possible as closed as necessary', unless providing open access would in particular:
  - be against the beneficiary's legitimate interests, including regarding commercial exploitation, or

- be contrary to any other constraints, in particular the EU competitive interests or the beneficiary's obligations under this Agreement; if open access is not provided (to some or all data), this must be justified in the DMP
- provide information via the repository about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to re-use or validate the data.

Metadata of deposited data must be open under a Creative Common Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent (to the extent legitimate interests or constraints are safeguarded), in line with the FAIR principles (in particular machine-actionable) and provide information at least about the following: datasets (description, date of deposit, author(s) and embargo); Horizon Europe or Euratom funding; grant project name, acronym and number; licensing terms; persistent identifiers for the dataset, the authors involved in the action, and, if possible, for their organisations and the grant. Where applicable, the metadata must include persistent identifiers for related publications and other research outputs.

#### Open science: additional practices

Where the call conditions impose additional obligations regarding open science practices, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

Where the call conditions impose additional obligations regarding the validation of scientific publications, the beneficiaries must provide (digital or physical) access to data or other results needed for validation of the conclusions of scientific publications, to the extent that their legitimate interests or constraints are safeguarded (and unless they already provided (open) access at publication).

Where the call conditions impose additional open science obligations in case of a public emergency, the beneficiaries must (if requested by the granting authority) immediately deposit any research output in a trusted repository and provide open access to it under a CC BY licence, a Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent. As an exception, if the access would be against the beneficiaries' legitimate interests, the beneficiaries must grant non-exclusive licenses — under fair and reasonable conditions — to legal entities that need the research output to address the public emergency and commit to rapidly and broadly exploit the resulting products and services at fair and reasonable conditions. This provision applies up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

#### **Plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities**

Unless excluded by the call conditions, the beneficiaries must provide and regularly update a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities.

#### **SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION (— ARTICLE 18)**

##### **Implementation in case of restrictions due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States**

Where the call conditions restrict participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security, the beneficiaries must ensure that none of the entities that participate as affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties are established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) — unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority.

The beneficiaries must moreover ensure that any cooperation with entities established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) does not affect the strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States.

### **Recruitment and working conditions for researchers**

The beneficiaries must take all measures to implement the principles set out in Annex II to the Council Recommendation on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe<sup>3</sup> ('the European Charter for Researchers'), in particular regarding:

- working conditions
- transparent recruitment processes based on merit, and
- career development.

The beneficiaries must ensure that researchers and all participants involved in the action are aware of them.

### **Specific rules for access to research infrastructure activities**

#### Definitions

Research Infrastructures — Facilities that provide resources and services for the research communities to conduct research and foster innovation in their fields. This definition includes the associated human resources, and it covers major equipment or sets of instruments; knowledge-related facilities such as collections, archives or scientific data infrastructures; computing systems, communication networks, and any other infrastructure, of a unique nature and open to external users, essential to achieve excellence in research and innovation. Where relevant, they may be used beyond research, for example for education or public services, and they may be 'single-sited', 'virtual' or 'distributed'<sup>4</sup>.

When implementing access to research infrastructure activities, the beneficiaries must respect the following conditions:

- for transnational access:
  - access which must be provided:

The access must be free of charge, transnational access to research infrastructure or installations for selected user-groups.

The access must include the logistical, technological and scientific support and the specific training that is usually provided to external researchers using the

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<sup>3</sup> Council Recommendation C/2023/1640 of 18 December 2023 on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe, Annex II (OJ C, C/2023/1640, 29.12.2023).

<sup>4</sup> See Article 2(1) of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme Regulation 2021/695.

infrastructure. Transnational access can be either in person (hands-on), provided to selected users that visit the installation to make use of it, or remote, through the provision to selected user-groups of remote scientific services (e.g. provision of reference materials or samples, remote access to a high-performance computing facility).

- categories of users that may have access:

Transnational access must be provided to selected user-groups, i.e. teams of one or more researchers (users).

The majority of the users must work in a country other than the country(ies) where the installation is located (unless access is provided by an international organisation, the Joint Research Centre (JRC), an ERIC or similar legal entity).

Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the action may benefit from the access (unless the users are working for SMEs).

Access for user groups with a majority of users not working in a EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country is limited to 20% of the total amount of units of access provided under the grant (unless a higher percentage is foreseen in Annex 1).

- procedure and criteria for selecting user groups:

The user groups must request access by submitting (in writing) a description of the work that they wish to carry out and the names, nationalities and home institutions of the users.

The user groups must be selected by (one or more) selection panels set up by the consortium.

The selection panels must be composed of international experts in the field, at least half of them independent from the consortium (unless otherwise specified in Annex 1).

The selection panels must assess all proposals received and recommend a short-list of the user groups that should benefit from access.

The selection panels must base their selection on scientific merit, taking into account that priority should be given to user groups composed of users who:

- have not previously used the installation and
- are working in countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exist.

It will apply the principles of transparency, fairness and impartiality.

Where the call conditions impose additional rules for the selection of user groups, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

- other conditions:

The beneficiaries must request written approval from the granting authority for the selection of user groups requiring visits to the installations exceeding 3 months (unless such visits are foreseen in Annex 1).

In addition, the beneficiaries must:

- advertise widely, including on a their websites, the access offered under the Agreement
  - promote equal opportunities in advertising the access and take into account the gender dimension when defining the support provided to users
  - ensure that users comply with the terms and conditions of the Agreement
  - ensure that its obligations under Articles 12, 13, 17 and 33 also apply to the users
  - keep records of the names, nationalities, and home institutions of users, as well as the nature and quantity of access provided to them
- for virtual access:
- access which must be provided:

The access must be free of charge, virtual access to research infrastructure or installations.

‘Virtual access’ means open and free access through communication networks to digital resources and services needed for research, without selecting the users to whom access is provided.

The access must include the support that is usually provided to external users.

Where allowed by the call conditions, beneficiaries may in justified cases define objective eligibility criteria (e.g. affiliation to a research or academic institution) for specific users.

- other conditions:

The beneficiaries must have the virtual access services assessed periodically by a board composed of international experts in the field, at least half of whom must be independent from the consortium (unless otherwise specified in Annex 1). For this purpose, information and statistics on the users and the nature and quantity of the access provided, must be made available to the board.

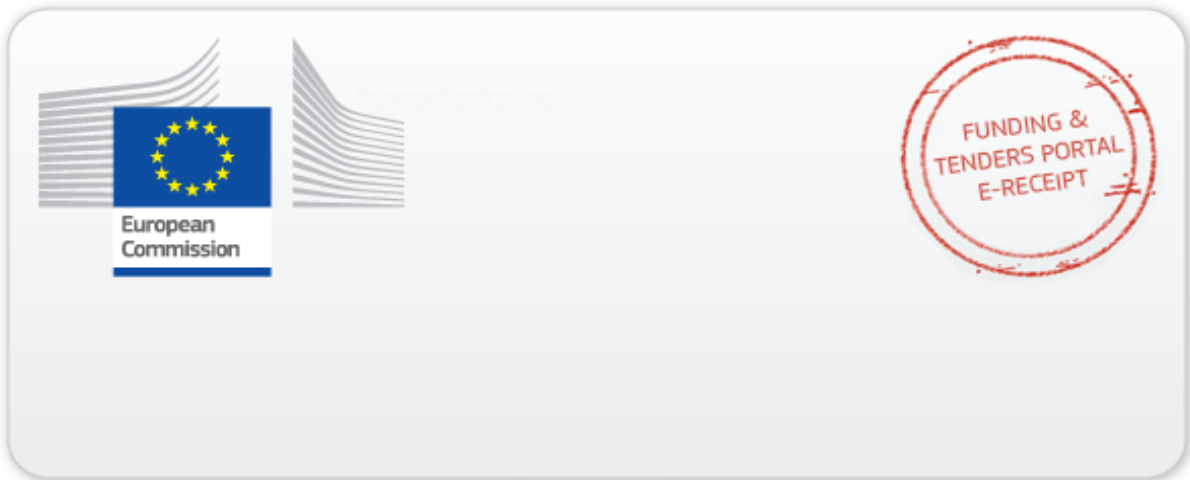
The beneficiaries must advertise widely, including on a dedicated website, the access offered under the grant and the eligibility criteria, if any.

Where the call conditions impose additional traceability<sup>5</sup> obligations, information on the traceability of the users and the nature and quantity of access must be provided by the beneficiaries.

These obligations apply regardless of the form of funding or budget categories used to declare the costs (unit costs or actual costs or a combination of the two).

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<sup>5</sup> According to the definition given in ISO 9000, i.e.: “Traceability is the ability to trace the history, application, use and location of an item or its characteristics through recorded identification data.” The users can be traced, for example, by authentication and/or by authorization or by other means that allows for analysis of the type of users and the nature and quantity of access provided.



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