



2014 - 2020
Towards the new
ENI CBC Med Programme
Vers le nouveau
Programme IEV CT Med
نحو برنامج ENI CBC Med جديد

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION WITHIN THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTRUMENT (ENI)

Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme



Strategic Environmental Assessment

- screening procedure -

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY OF THE PRELIMINARY REPORT



Programme funded by the
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1. The European Directive 2001/42/EC

The European Directive 2001/42/EC establishes that plans and programs that may have negative effects on the environment are subjected to an assessment procedure called Strategic Environmental Assessment. The aim of SEA is to ensure that environmental considerations are taken into account from the outset of the plan/program making, that environmental impacts are identified and eliminated or reduced as much as possible. SEA is also an inclusive process whereby different environmental authorities are informed and consulted while carrying out the evaluation. The Directive also provides for public consultations in order for the general public to have a say on the proposed Plan/Program before its final draft and approval.

When it is not evident that a proposed plan/program has significant impacts on the environment a so-called “screening” procedure is carried out, i.e. a first evaluation of the plan/program contents to evaluate whether its implementation may cause negative impacts, building on available information. In order to ease the involvement of the general public and make decision-making processes more open and transparent, SEA regulation envisages that a non-technical summary of the analysis and assessments carried out is elaborated and put at disposal of the public. The present document is the non-technical summary of the screening report concerning the proposed ENI CBC MED Program (European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean Basin).

This document is structured as follows: firstly, the main objectives of the program are reported; subsequently, it is summarized how the screening process was carried out and the main results of this exercise are presented. Procedural measures envisaged to guarantee that future projects and actions will be accurately assessed to avoid or minimize potential environmental impacts are put forward and illustrated.

2. Framework and General Objectives of the Programme

The ENI CBC MED 2014-2020 is structured in: 1 General Objective, 2 Overarching Objectives (OOs), 4 Thematic Objectives (TOs) and 11 Priorities. The General Objective aims to *foster a fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development* that may advance cross-border integration and valorise participating countries' territories and values, in line with the sustainable development principles.

3. The screening process

In the context of the screening procedure, after an overview of the environmental characteristics of the Mediterranean Basin, an analysis aiming to verify the coherence and complementarity between the Programme and the programmatic framework of the context in which it occurs was made.

The Programme strategy results coherent with the main policies, new EU Programmes and other relevant initiatives, focusing on a limited number of Priorities on which an effective cross-border cooperation both adds value to local, national and regional policies and does not cover elements already funded by other programmes and initiatives. In particular, the ENI CBC MED added value lies in the participation of a wide range of actors resulting in international partnerships sharing different backgrounds and expertises and directly committed in the local governance processes.

Furthermore, all expected results of Programme's priorities are in line with the objectives of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD).

After the analysis of single Programme's priorities and their relative expected results and indicative types of action, a preliminary and merely indicative screening of the potential interferences of the Programme implementation with the environment was developed against 5 macro-environmental dimensions (water, air emissions and climate change, waste management, energy, ecosystem and landscape).



The aim of the screening process is to verify if the Programme has likely significant effects on the environment, according to the set of criteria reported in Annex II of European Directive 2001/42/EC:

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to Article 3(5):

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
 - intensive land-use,
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

With reference to the first set of criteria defined by the European Directive 2001/42/EC, a preliminary assessment is reported in the table below.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects	
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects	Assessment
The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	The programme defines wide and strategic objectives and priorities, for each one allocating financing, to be pursued through the implementation of individual projects proposed by the Partner Countries.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The programme does not influence other plans or programmes directly. However, priority 4.4 focuses on the incorporation of the Ecosystem based management approach to ICZM into local development planning also using a participatory approach, contributing to introduce a more sustainable and participatory management of the costs.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The Programme is consistent with the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), in fact all the Programme's priorities aim to promote progress towards sustainability in the economic, social and environmental areas.
Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	The Programme defines wide priorities, so it is not possible to define specific environmental problems at this stage of definition, an integration of the environmental considerations will be carried out later in the process (see the five levels of environmental attention in Chapter 6).
The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection)	The Programme provides financing in the field of environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation with particular reference to: water supply, waste management, renewable energy and ICZM.

With reference to the second set of criteria, since the ENI CBC MED Programme 2014-2020 defines wide and strategic objectives and priorities for each one allocating financing, to be pursued through the implementation of individual projects proposed by the Partner Countries, it is not possible at this stage to give a precise definition of:

- the characteristics of the potential environmental effects deriving by the *specific intervention typologies* (as defined by Annex II of the Directive 2001/42/EC: probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of impacts; cumulative impacts; cross-border nature of the impacts; risks to human health or the environment; magnitude and spatial extent of impacts etc.);
- the *specific environmental characteristics of the areas* affected by the projects.

In fact, both these aspects will be known only in the next phase of Countries' participation to the call. The preliminary assessment highlights that on the one hand all the Programme's priorities are expected to have beneficial effects, for pursuing the objectives to promote progress towards sustainability in the economic, social and environmental areas and will be largely characterized by intangible actions with limited pilot interventions.

On the other hand, even though priorities' implementation is characterized by a low likelihood of impacts' occurrence (as it is expected that projects will be largely characterized by intangible actions with limited pilot interventions), potential environmental effects cannot be entirely excluded for some priorities at this level of definition.

Programme Priorities for which potential environmental effects cannot be entirely excluded given the current status of information available are:

- **Priority 1.1** - Support innovative start-up and recently established enterprises.
- **Priority 1.2** - Strengthen and support networks, clusters, consortia and value chains.
- **Priority 1.3** - Encourage sustainable tourism initiative and actions.
- **Priority 4.1** - Support sustainable initiatives targeting innovative and technological solutions to increase water efficiency and encourage use of non-conventional water supply.
- **Priority 4.2** - Reduce municipal waste generation and promote source-separated collection and the optimal exploitation of its organic component.
- **Priority 4.3** - Renewable energy and energy efficiency - Support cost-effective and innovative energy rehabilitations relevant to building types and climatic zones, with a focus on public buildings.
- **Priority 4.4** - Integrated Coastal Zone Management - Incorporate the Ecosystem-Based management approach to ICZM into local development planning.

In particular, some priorities foresee to realize pilot projects to develop innovative products and services: in theory, depending on which type of product/service it will be developed, this may cause an increase of pressure on the environment in the form of increased resource consumption or emission of pollutants.

Another priority concerns the development of sustainable tourism including eco-tourism, adventure tourism, medical tourism, wine and food tourism, historic, cultural and religious tourism, particularly in less known destinations. Although the priority clearly states that such developments shall be sustainable, it is clear that any increase of human presence in a certain area entails an increase of resource consumption (water, energy) as well as emissions (e.g. waste). Plus, tourist presence may be an element of disturbance for wild flora and fauna in natural areas. At the same time, if well managed, tourism can provide resources on otherwise marginal areas that can be used also to improve the environmental state, for instance through restoration projects). Overall, the balance between these two effects cannot be assessed at the present stage of the Programme and the assessment warns on the need to carefully design and implement future action deriving from this priority to avoid identified potential harms to the environment.

Similar considerations apply to some action types under priority 4 that aims to develop new technologies and or good practices in relation to water use and water quality. Such actions will certainly have positive effects on the "water" component of the environment as they will increase the efficiency of water use, diminish water loss and improve water quality. At the same time, and again depending on the type of actions that will be implemented, these same actions can potentially determine negative effects on other environmental dimensions, for example in terms of energy consumption or disturbance to terrestrial and marine habitats.

For this reason, the Programme foresees five levels of environmental attention operating as "screeners", following one after the other, so as to progressively require additional information only to those proposals having possible effects on the environment.

In this way it is possible: to require an environmental focus already from the initial stage of the formulation of all the single proposals and to reduce the bureaucratic aspects of assessment, because only some of the proposals will be required to reach the fifth level of attention.

1 st LEVEL	<p>Contents of the “ENI CBC MED PROGRAMME” and of the “Preliminary Environmental Report”</p>	<p>The Programme is based on environmental analysis and it is characterized by a high level of attention to the sustainable development issues. To avoid potential effects, possible in any kind of anthropic activity, some additional "elements of environmental attention" are planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first "screening" is represented by this Preliminary Environmental Report, with the assessment of environmental effects, the indication of Programme Priorities to be subjected to environmental attention, the definition of different levels of environmental attention. • A Summary synthesizing the main conclusion of the Preliminary Environmental Report. • The Stakeholders Consultation: all National Environmental Authorities (EAs) will receive a copy of the Programme together with the Preliminary Environmental Report, its Summary and an assessment Questionnaire.
2 nd LEVEL	<p>Call for Proposals</p>	<p>The Call for Proposals represents the second “screener” of the Programme. In the Call for Proposals the criteria on environmental sustainability to be included in the assessment will be strengthened:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for all proposals (regardless of whether they are material or immaterial, and regardless of whether they belong to Priorities requiring a greater environmental attention) it will be required to fill an “Environmental box” • only for proposals regarding the Programme Priorities with potential environmental effects, it will be required to fill in the “Screening Checklist for Concept Note”
3 th LEVEL	<p>“Concept Note” Submission + Assessment</p>	<p>The “Concept Note” phase represents the first assessment of the specific intervention’s proposal. At this stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All “<u>Concept Notes</u>” (regardless of whether they are material or immaterial, and regardless of whether they belong to Priorities requiring a greater environmental attention) are required to present the “Environmental box” with the aim to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - precisely define the type of intervention envisaged and, if any, its possible direct or indirect effect on the environment; - define possible environmental benefits deriving from the implementation of the project’s proposal. • <u>Only “Concept Notes” regarding the Programme Priorities with potential environmental effects</u> (see Chapter 5), are required to present the “Screening Checklist for Concept Note” (Checklist A). <p>After receiving all the documents, the “Environmental box” and the “Checklist A” will be assessed and the MA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require details or require to fill the “Checklists A” <u>to some proposals not included</u> in the “Programme Priorities with potential environmental effects” which, in the light of the “Environmental box” contents, may have potential environmental effects; • require, <u>only for those proposals needing a greater level of assessment detail</u>, to fill in the “Effects Checklist for Full Application” (Checklist B).
4 th LEVEL	<p>“Full Application Form” Submission + Assessment</p>	<p>The “Full Application Form” phase represents the second assessment of the specific intervention’s proposal. At this stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>only those proposals needing a greater level of assessment as identified in the previous phase</u>, are required to present the “Effects Checklist for Full Application” (Checklist B). <p>After receiving all the documents, the “Checklist B” will be assessed and the MA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require, <u>only for those proposals needing a greater level of assessment detail</u>, to fill in the “Sustainability Checklist and Report” (Checklist C).
5 th LEVEL	<p>“Sustainability Checklist and Report”</p>	<p>This phase represents the last assessment of the specific intervention’s proposal. At this stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>only those proposals needing a greater level of assessment as identified in the previous phase</u>, are required to present the “Sustainability Checklist and Report” (Checklist C). <p>After receiving all the documents, the “Checklist C” will be assessed and the MA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require a EAs consultation • prescribe mitigation measures or also reject the Project.



For the assessment is carried out for successive levels of in-depth analysis, passing through successive more detailed sieves, more specific evaluations are required only when the intervention proposal achieved a greater level of definition (e.g. typology, localization).

In addition, another measure aimed at guaranteeing the overall sustainability of the Program is put forward: plans, programs and projects financed by this Program are subjected to exiting SEA and EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) procedures defined by EU and national/regional legislations. The possible exemption of the Program itself from the full SEA procedure does not imply that further plans, programs and projects partially or totally financed by it are excluded from these procedure. To ensure that all types of interventions with potential effects on the environment undergo an environmental assessment phase, it is proposed that those plans, programs and projects which are included in the field of application of SEA and EIA EC Directive and that are realized in non-EU countries are accompanied by an Environmental Impact Study or an Environmental Report with the same contents as those provided for by the two above-mentioned directives.

This is justified by the fact that such Programs, Plans and Projects are supported by the European Union, so it appears fair that the same level of consideration of environmental factors is given in both EU and non EU Countries, even if in the latter case it is not possible, by legislation, to conduct a full SEA/EIA.

4. Conclusions

The ENI CBC MED Program aims to *foster a fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development* in the Mediterranean Basin, enhancing cooperation between and within the Northern and Southern rims of the Mediterranean Sea. A screening of the possible effects of the Program's implementation on the environment has been carried out to establish whether the Program shall undergo a full environmental assessment.

Result of this exercise showed that action types foreseen by the Program are, in the majority of cases, neutral with respect to the environment, as they are mainly networking and immaterial actions. Some other ones have clear positive effects on some or all identified environmental dimensions, whilst in a minority of cases, potential negative effects cannot be excluded at this stage of definition. Overall, the likelihood of actual occurrence of negative impacts is deemed low; however, much will depend on how concretely the stated priorities will be implemented through individual projects. The main areas of potential concern regard the development of new products/services, the increase of tourism and the realization of facilities for water provision/sanitation. All these action certainly entail positive effects on some environmental components, but can also determine negative impacts on other aspects of the environment.

To steer the future Program implementation towards environmental sustainability, a screening mechanism is put forward for future projects that will be presented by the applicants. Such mechanism is articulated in 5 main levels of attention, which will be progressively activated depending on the characteristics of the presented proposal and their location. Such an arrangement is considered to contribute to the overall environmental sustainability of the Programme.