

Subject: Appropriate co-financing rate for LIFE CSA projects on sustainable energy

Dear Experts and Delegates of the LIFE Committee,
Dear Representatives of the European Commission,

In the frame of your discussions on the first LIFE multiannual work programme, you are also called to fix the co-financing rate for “Coordination and Support Actions” (CSA) for the transition to renewable energy and increased energy efficiency¹.

The signatories of this letter represent thousands of new LIFE applicants redirected from Horizon 2020 as a result of the transfer of the “Coordination and Support Actions”² to the new Clean Energy Transition sub-programme. We are cities, regions, energy agencies, NGOs, SMEs and experts from across Europe’s renewable energy and energy efficiency value chains. Our determination, with the right support from the LIFE programme, can help the European Union to achieve the Green Deal objectives.

To this end, we call upon you to set the co-financing rate for CSA projects at above 80% and as close to 100% as possible. Only such level of co-funding would allow our organisations and our members to continue our activities as in our shared long-standing experience:

- **National match funding for energy** related topics exists only in a few countries and even then, is only accessible through competitive bidding with often conflicting timelines and evaluation criteria. EU co-funding of projects in this field has been vital for local and regional authorities and their supporting organisations that include energy agencies, cooperatives and NGOs. Absence of match funding has often obliged such smaller organisations to match fund with their own resources, thus destabilising even further their often-precarious financial situations.
- **EU co-funding for CSA sustainable energy projects has been unique.** CSA for sustainable energy are not pure research, and therefore do not attract research funds and early investors, nor are they market products attracting enterprises for investment. CSA projects prepare the ground for concrete investments and develop favourable policy frameworks. National, regional and local co-funding of this type of measures is extremely rare and challenging to obtain compared to projects focusing on direct investments in pilots and demonstration sites.
- **The current H2020 rates for CSA encourage organisations to gain new competences, design bolder projects and develop new services for energy transition.** Lower co-funding rates require a perfect alignment between the call topic and the applicants’ pre-existing skills and strategies. Testing and replicating new approaches is essential for the market uptake of sustainable energy solutions. Reimbursement rates that allow companies and other organisations to adequately mitigate their risk are essential if they are to embark on transformational projects.
- **The impact of CSA-energy projects risks being compromised.** Evaluation reports show that CSA-projects have led to impressive results in terms of primary energy savings, RES generation, CO2 reductions and investments in sustainable energy. Achieving these results was in part ensured by appropriate co-financing rates enabling project promoters to focus on the implementation of the actions rather than on securing match funding.

CSA projects on clean energy helped regions, cities and communities to transform their environmental and climate ambitions into action. They enabled to stimulate local economic development, create jobs, increase demand and supply for energy efficiency services and products, implement and upscale renewable energy projects, develop the first adaptation strategies, alleviate energy poverty, improve air quality and truly inform and empower citizens and local initiatives. These projects have been powerful drivers of European integration, creating transnational long-lasting partnerships, jointly embarking municipalities and regions towards common sustainable development goals.

We believe that under the right conditions, these actions can continue this momentum under the LIFE programme.

Before taking any decision on this point, we warmly encourage you to read the position papers of this letter’s signatories (links below) containing testimonials and recommendations from sustainable energy experts from across Europe.

Yours sincerely,

¹ In accordance with article 17 point 2. ebb), confirmation of common understanding on the Regulation establishing LIFE, 20 March 2019.

² Article 10 2. e), confirmation of common understanding on the Regulation establishing LIFE, 20 March 2019.

List of Signatories (and links to recommendations)



FEDARENE (European Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and the Environment) is a European network of regional and local organisations which implement, coordinate and facilitate sustainable energy and environment policies.

- [FEDARENE's recommendations for CSA for Clean Energy Transition within LIFE 2021-2027](#)



Energy Cities is the European association of cities in energy transition, representing over 1,000 local governments in 30 countries.

- [Energy Cities' recommendations for the Clean Energy Transition sub-programme within LIFE 2021-2027](#)



EUREC is the voice of renewable energy research in Europe, representing 38 European Research Centres active in renewable energy. The purpose of the association is to promote and support the development of innovative technologies and human resources to enable a prompt transition to a sustainable energy system.

- [EUREC co-signs letter asking LIFE committee for a fair co-financing rate](#)



EUROCITIES is the political platform for major European cities. Founded in 1986, we network the local governments of over 140 of Europe's largest cities and over 40 partner cities that between them govern some 140 million citizens across 35 countries. We engage in dialogue with the European institutions across a wide range of policy areas affecting cities, which include economic development, environment, transport and mobility, social affairs, culture, the knowledge society, and public services.

- [EUROCITIES statement on the LIFE programme 2021-2027](#)



Climate Alliance

Climate Alliance - With over 1,800 members spread across 27 European countries, Climate Alliance is the world's largest city network dedicated to climate action.



CEMR is the broadest organisation of local and regional governments in Europe, with over 60 national associations of municipalities and regions from 41 European countries. These represent some 130,000 local and regional governments. CEMR's objectives are twofold: to influence European legislation on behalf of local and regional governments and to provide a platform for exchange between its member associations and their elected officials and experts. Climate, energy, mobility, air quality and environment are some of the themes in which we work on.



REScoop.eu is the European federation of citizen energy cooperatives. Our network represents 1.500 energy cooperatives and 1.000.000 people across Europe. Energy cooperatives are key in leading the energy transition. Cooperatives make it possible for citizens to participate in renewable energy, energy efficiency and other technologies that will decarbonize our energy system.



EHPA (European Heat Pump Association) represents the majority of the European heat pump industry. Its 134 members comprising: heat pump and component manufacturers, research institutes, universities, testing labs and energy agencies.



Solar Heat Europe is the voice of the solar heat industry, actively promoting the use of solar thermal technology for renewable heating and cooling in Europe. With around 40 members in Europe, the organisation represents directly or indirectly over 90% of the industry across the value chain.

- [Solar Heat Europe shares an important message on energy projects in the MFF](#)



EREF (European Renewable Energies Federation) is the federation of national renewable energy associations from all EU Member States, representing all renewable energy technologies. Its objective is to promote the interests of independent power, fuel and heat production from renewable sources and to establish non-discriminatory access to the European energy market.



DHC+ Technology Platform, set up under the umbrella of Euroheat & Power, is the European hub for research & innovation in district heating and cooling, representing more than 50 members from academia, research, business and industry.



EGECE (European Geothermal Energy Council) is the voice of geothermal energy industry, representing more than 120 members from 28 countries.



IEECP (Institute for European Energy and Climate Policy) provides social and economic research and capacity building in energy and climate policy issues through the EU Horizon 2020 and other programmes.



eceee (European Council for an Energy Efficient Economy) is Europe's largest and oldest NGO dedicated to energy efficiency. We generate and provide evidence-based knowledge and analysis of policies, and we facilitate co-operation and networking.



EFIEES, the European Federation of Intelligent Energy Efficiency Services, is the voice of energy service companies (ESCOs) and their national associations in 12 EU Member States, representing over 130.000 professionals engaged in the design and implementation of energy-efficiency solutions.

- [EFIEES' Answer to the Consultation on the future of the LIFE Programme](#)



The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) represents more than 150 regional authorities from 24 countries across Europe and beyond, and works to ensure that a balanced territorial development is at the heart of the European Union and its policies.