



2018/0000(RSP)

08.2.2018

DRAFT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B8-0000/2018

pursuant to Rule 128(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on Mid-term evaluation of the LIFE programme
(2018/0000(RSP))

**Dubravka Šuica, Nicola Caputo, Julie Girling, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy,
Stefan Eck, Marco Affronte, Mireille D'Ornano**
on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food
Safety

B8-0000/2018

European Parliament resolution on Mid-term evaluation of the LIFE programme (2018/0000(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication of 6 November 2017 COM (2017) 642 final, on the Report accompanying the mid-term evaluation of the LIFE programme and the related staff working documents, SWD(2017)355 final and 356 final,
 - having regard to the Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the establishment of a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 Text with EEA relevance,
 - having regard to the question to the Commission on Mid-term evaluation of the LIFE programme (O-000000/2018 – B8-0000/2018),
 - having regard to the motion for a resolution of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety,
 - having regard to Rules 128(5) and 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the LIFE programme contributes to sustainable development and to the achievement of the objectives and targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the 7th Union Environmental Action Programme and other relevant EU environment and climate strategies and foresees addressing challenges such as halting the loss of biodiversity or reducing the costs of inaction related to the consequences and effects of climate change;
- B. whereas the mid-term evaluation provides a first overview on the changes implemented and concludes that the LIFE programme is on track to be effective as it is well placed to meet its targets and deliver on environmental and climate objectives;
- C. whereas the mid-term evaluation reports recognises that most projects have yet to begin and few projects have been completed (the average duration of a LIFE project is 4 to 5 years), claiming that a full analysis of the long-term effect of LIFE, as required by the LIFE Regulation on Article 15(2) and 9, is premature at this stage; which has led to the fact that the mid-term evaluation has focused mainly on the processes put in place, ongoing activities (such as projects already financed) and, where relevant their anticipated results;
- D. whereas the LIFE programme also consists of a new category of projects, jointly funded integrated projects, which will operate on a large territorial scale. These projects aim to implement environmental and climate policy and better integrate such policy aims into other policy areas;

General remarks

1. Stresses that final conclusions cannot be properly drawn as there is an insufficient amount of information and data available within the mid-term evaluation report; looks forward to the preparation of an impact assessment on a continued LIFE programme post-2020;
2. Regrets that two Member States share more than a third of the entire LIFE budget for traditional grants for 2014 and 2015, leading to an uneven distribution of funds among Member States and confirming that national allocations are not effective in ensuring a more balanced distribution of projects; Considers it therefore necessary that new, effective mechanisms are to ensure a more equitable distribution and greater effectiveness of LIFE funds between Member States need to be further developed in order to boost Member States' capacity to submit more good quality projects and provide a better geographical balance of the integrated projects;
3. Recognises the importance of the integrated projects which serve as a catalyst to implement environmental or climate plans or strategies at regional, multi-regional or national level. Highlights also the importance of having international projects included in LIFE as environmental and climate issues often have a transboundary dimension. Considers that the scope and number of these projects should be increased in the future and that the Commission should ensure that integrated projects are selected on the basis of merit and should give an equal chance to all applicants;
4. Underlines that reaching the full potential of these integrated projects depends on the availability of complementary finance, in particular from mainstreaming of environment and climate in the major EU financing instruments;
5. Stresses that LIFE has played a significant role in implementing Natura 2000 and the Birds and Habitats Directives in the Member States, and in increasing the general level of awareness concerning biodiversity at regional and local level;
6. Agrees with the report that 'after-LIFE' plans are a positive improvement and that a systematic follow-up of all projects to identify best practices, cost-saving measures and a comprehensive customised support for the most promising ones could allow the replication/sustainability potential to further elaborate;
7. Welcomes that the transfer of most of the grant management from the Commission to the executive agency EASME seems to be well on track and it is expected to produce an overall gain in efficiency, above the EUR 8.2 million gains initially planned for 2014-2020;
8. Emphasises the need to reinforce the role of NGOs and civil society associations in proposing, designing and piloting the LIFE projects;

Effectiveness of the programme

9. Considers that the grant management procedures, in particular the application and reporting processes not only need to be simplified but also significantly accelerated;
10. Calls on the Commission to improve the access to information regarding LIFE programme application and management at the national, regional and local level;

11. Requests that each project should be accompanied by a communication strategy to better target audiences, deliver more objective-specific and target-specific key messages and ensure more structured coordination between players;
12. Regrets that at present the existing monitoring and reporting systems are focused exclusively at the project level, and recognises the importance of increasing the programme performance to strengthen the coherence of the LIFE programme objectives;

Efficiency of the programme

13. Calls for further evidence of the effectiveness and efficiency of the projects, especially with regard to costs and savings, as they are expected to provide value for money;
14. Underlines that in order to achieve maximum output of the EU financing, a similar project in a same place should not be financed from other EU budgetary sources. Programmes receiving financial assistance under the LIFE Programme shall not receive assistance from other Union financial instruments;

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15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission.