EKLIPSE
Knowledge & Learning Mechanism on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services

Developing a mechanism for supporting better decisions on our environment based on the best available knowledge.

CALL FOR EXPERTS No.5/2018 EKLIPSE – June 2018

What is hampering the effectiveness of existing approaches that aim to restore biodiversity and ecosystem function and services? (CfR.2/2017/2)

Deadline for Call: 6th July, 2018

EKLIPSE is inviting experts to join an expert working group to understand what is hampering the effectiveness of existing approaches that aim to restore biodiversity and ecosystem function and services:

- Are you an expert in restoration?
- Would you like to contribute directly to a policy-relevant process in your field of expertise?
- Would you like to expand your network and learn about methods of knowledge synthesis?
- Are you interested in collaborating in a trans-disciplinary and multi-cultural setting?

Then please apply at www.eklipse-mechanism.eu

Important dates and information:

- Interested experts should apply before midnight on the **6th July, 2018,** following the rules and procedures detailed below.
- The Experts of the working group will be selected by **16th July, 2018** and should start its work immediately thereafter.
- We will aim to have a first expert group meeting in **week starting 23rd July, 2018.**
- The deadline for reporting is **30th June 2019**.
- Participation in this expert working group will require approximately 10% of your time – please find more information on expectations of and support to EKLIPSE Expert Working Groups **here**.

EKLIPSE is developing a European Mechanism to answer requests from policy makers and other societal actors on issues related to biodiversity and ecosystem services. EKLIPSE organizes and facilitates knowledge synthesis processes, horizon scanning and societal dialogue on topics that relate to or impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services by making the best knowledge available. It invites experts to contribute their knowledge.

More information on the processes and the EKLIPSE project funded by the EU in H2020 is available at ***www.eklipse-mechanism.eu***

1 Invitation to join an expert working group

EKLIPSE is inviting **experts to join an expert working group** to develop recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness of restoration efforts in the European context, including knowledge gaps but also other barriers or constraints**.** Suggestions for improvements should take into account governance structures, feasibility, social implications, politics, planning issues and economics.

The expert working group will cover diverse and complementary skills (including multidisciplinary skills and a broad geographical coverage – see section 6.2) and will interact with relevant stakeholders to ensure appropriate methodological choices and uptake of outputs.

2 Request to be addressed by this call

Background to this request

A number of restoration targets and cross-sectoral actions aim to restore degraded ecosystems and their services, as contributions both to safeguarding natural heritage and to enhancing ecosystems' integrity as natural assets vital to sustainable development in Europe. However, many of these restoration efforts are not achieving their aims.

The aim of this request is to understand the reasons why current approaches to restoration are not as effective as they could be. These reasons are expected to be related but not restricted to the lack of, or poor access to, relevant knowledge. Such understanding and efforts to address the identified obstacles can enable stakeholders from a wide range of different fields to achieve greater success in restoration and better contribute to the EU's industries and economic sectors that are dependent on these natural assets (e.g. water- and fibre-related/dependent industries), as well as improve human well-being.

Current EU policy context

Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 states that "*By 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems*". A number of actions have already taken place to address Target 2[1] (see Annex 4). A report on priorities for the restoration of ecosystems and their services[2] provides useful clarification of the key terms used in the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and in particular Target 2 and Action 6a, specifically the definition of restoration used for the purposes of this request (other definitions can be found in Annex 4):

> Restoration objectives should be tailored to the ecosystem type, the services it provides, the recent history of the site and the location. For each ecosystem type, several states or ecological conditions can be described along a continuum from poor to excellent. Any significant improvement of ecosystem condition that moves an area of land/sea to a better state/condition should be regarded as a contribution to the 15% restoration target. An ecosystem can be assigned to one of 4 levels of condition and progress in a positive direction from one level to the next is recognized as restoration.

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/strategy/target2/index_en.htm

[2] Lammerant, Johan; Peters, Richard; Snethlage, Mark; Delbaere, Ben; Dickie, Ian; Whiteley, Guy. (2013) Implementation of 2020 EU Biodiversity Strategy: Priorities for the restoration of ecosystems and their services in the EU. Report to the European Commission. ARCADIS (in cooperation with ECNC and Eftec)

EU Policy relevance and timeliness of the request

The request is of high EU policy relevance. Target 2 of the Biodiversity Strategy is the only policy document that contains a direct and quantitative target for restoration. However, many other EU level policies relate to restoration aims in indirect ways, including: the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives and associated Natura 2000 network; obligations under the Water Framework Directive, the EU Bathing Water Directive, and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive; deployment of Green Infrastructure (Action 6b of the biodiversity strategy); the EU policy on climate change adaptation; the greening measures introduced into the revised Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The mid-term review of the Biodiversity Strategy in 2015 highlighted that for Target 2[3], "Progress has been made on policy and knowledge improvement actions under this target, and some restoration activities have taken place in Member States. However, this has not yet halted the trend of degradation of ecosystems and services. National and regional frameworks to promote restoration and green infrastructure need to be developed and implemented".

The outputs of the request process would be most timely before the final review of the Biodiversity Strategy (end 2019) and could be used by DG ENV to feed into the following policy processes:

- The Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES)
- Green Infrastructure Working Group.

Call for Knowledge

A Call for Knowledge related to this request was carried out in January and was open until 23rd February 2018. The Call for Knowledge was hosted on the KNOCK Forum and resulted in seven contributions from experts from Spain, Sweden, Czech Republic, UK and France, as well as the identification of relevant publications. For details, see the Document of Work for this request.

3. SUGGESTED PROGRAMME OF WORK AND METHODS

This request is expected to lead to the identification of gaps related to restoration research and practice. It is not restricted to a specific type of restoration[4] or ecosystem. It focuses on constraints or barriers to effective restoration including the identification of knowledge gaps restricting restoration approaches/actions, appropriate methodologies, optimal management and effectiveness of interventions. This topic would therefore require input from the social sciences as well as ecological research needs, pointing to the fact that some of the gaps will relate to research, while others will point to impediments to the use of existing knowledge, including lack of awareness of that knowledge.

The programme of work could follow a two-pronged approach (synergistic and in parallel):

1) Identification of barriers to implementation, including the typology identified above, namely literature/research-derived knowledge gaps identified by academics, as well as the identification from scientists and people trying to implement restoration (i.e. practitioners) of other factors (e.g. governance; economics; politics, planning issues) that are hampering restoration efforts, including communication of (existing) knowledge, linkages between researchers and relevant

[3] https://biodiversity.europa.eu/mtr/biodiversity-strategy-plan/target-2-review

[4] See Ockendon et al (2018). One hundred priority questions for landscape restoration in Europe. Biological Conservation 221: 198-208.

stakeholders, i.e. practitioners, and capacity building. A synthesis of this step would differentiate between knowledge needs/gaps (here we could link to the 100-question paper and how we will build on its outputs) or implementation gaps, i.e. other constraints/barriers;

2) Assessment of available knowledge and where this needs to be improved.

The first aspect could be addressed using either a **multiple expert consultation with formal consensus method such as Delphi**; or one or more **focus group(s)**. The second aspect could be addressed through a **scoping review**.

While the expert/stakeholder consultation might suffice on its own, the timeline for this request allows for the use of two methods. This is anticipated to improve information coverage and can provide a further measure of confidence in key issues identified through both methods. Both a scoping review and expert elicitation can be designed to identify relevant available knowledge, knowledge gaps and barriers to implementation. It is anticipated that these aspects would be addressed simultaneously.

There is also scope to apply a conceptual modelling approach as an initial step to improve the framing of the problem. Through the use of a method such as joint fact-finding or scenario analysis, this step could clarify the precise questions of interest and expedite the identification or design of subsequent synthesis approaches. Some of these methods also allow the problem and approach to be presented visually, which can be particularly helpful for stakeholder communication.

For more information on each of these methods, please refer to the EKLIPSE report on knowledge synthesis methods[5].

4 Implementation steps and timeline

The work is expected to follow the EKLIPSE knowledge synthesis process, i.e. it will include the following steps:

- **Kick-off dialogue meeting with EKLIPSE** Knowledge Coordination Body (KCB) to ensure common understanding of the request among experts (within 3 weeks of nomination of expert group).
- **Preparation of the work** (to be concluded within 12 weeks of nomination)
    - Scanning of literature and other sources
    - Development of methodological protocol (with support of the EKLIPSE expert group for knowledge synthesis methods)
    - Agreement of methodological protocol with KCB and requesters
    - Review of protocol through open consultation (organized by EKLIPSE)
- **Programme of work**
    - Early draft (to be discussed with KCB and possibly requesters)
    - Full draft completed for review.
- **Finalisation including review***

[5] Dicks LV, Haddaway N, Hernández-Morcillo M, Mattsson B, Randall N, Failler P,Ferretti J, Livoreil B, Saarikoski H, Santamaria L, Rodela R, Velizarova E,and Wittmer H. (2017). Knowledge synthesis for environmental decisions:an evaluation of existing methods, and guidance for their selection, use anddevelopment – a report from the EKLIPSE project

- Extended peer review (via open consultation, organised by EKLIPSE)
- Presentation of process and results to requesters and stakeholders: May 2019
- Revision
- Final product for requester by 30th June 2019.

*Exact order e.g. first revision then presentation or vice versa tbd

5 Support provided by EKLIPSE

EKLIPSE team: The expert working group will be supported in all steps by the EKLIPSE Secretariat in communication, documentation (via the EKLIPSE website), and dissemination of products as required for this request. The working group will be supported thematically and strategically by the KCB.

Financial support: EKLIPSE activities rely on in-kind contributions as in similar science-policy processes. The benefits for experts and institutions arise from the networking in the group and the visibility of expertise to policy and society via the products. EKLIPSE will actively support this visibility of experts and their institution's contributions. In addition:

- kick-off meeting, focus group meeting and final meeting will be hosted by and travel costs covered via EKLIPSE funds as needed
- upon specific request, individual experts from Eastern and Southern European countries might be supported via a honorary contract by an EKLIPSE partner institution.
- a maximum budget of € 8.000 can be granted for tasks such as the literature review and synthesis (for this a separate contract is required see section 6).

Technical support: Access to literature databases will be facilitated if needed. EKLIPSE will cover the layout, printing, and dissemination of interim and final products, i.e. using the OPPLA Platform[6].

6 Eligibility and applicant information

6.1 Selection criteria for the composition of the Expert Group

Selection of the expert working group will be done by the KCB according to selection process and criteria outlined below (6.2) and on the EKLIPSE website.

The expert working group should cover all relevant disciplines including natural, social, economic and planning sciences. Gender balance and geographical diversity of EU countries will be considered in the selection. If teams are applying, this will also apply, and the KCB may decide to complement a team selected with additional individual experts. The working group is expected to have up to 10 experts.

6.2 Selection criteria for individual experts

- Demonstrated expertise or experience in relation to the call covering one or more of the following: **restoration practitioners and specialists in ecological engineering, circular economy, water-smart solutions, species and landscape management, climate resilience/mitigation, food security and restoration technologies**.
- Experience with biodiversity and ecosystem services and/or sustainable development as well as with European policy processes.

[6] See www.oppla.eu

- Experiences in inter- and transdisciplinary work on topics related to the Biodiversity Strategy and in science-policy interface processes
- Experts will have to comply with the principles and rules of EKLIPSE (e.g. conflicts of interest policy (see http://www.eklipse-mechanism.eu/our_ethical_framework for more detail).
- Project partners of EKLIPSE and KCB members are excluded.

See Guidance note on Preparing and managing calls for experts for more information.

6.3 Process and eligibility criteria for supporting contracts

Based on the needs identified by the expert working group in its kick-off meeting, EKLIPSE can support the work of the group by sub-contracting some tasks to individual experts (or institutions, from and beyond the Expert working Group) via working contracts up to a total amount of 20,000€ (in this case the Expert Working Group through the sub-contracted third party will be fully responsible for all expenses related to its work; e.g. travel expenses, meeting costs, honorary contracts, editing work, etc… The 8000€ mentioned in section 5 is included in this subcontract). Please note that this amount of 20,000€ will not be re-adjusted according the overheads of the sub-contracted third party.

The aim of these would be to carry out dedicated work supporting the Group, e.g., a literature search and/or review based on the protocols decided by the Group. An EKLIPSE partner would prepare and issue a (restricted) call for tender for this purpose.

Honorary contracts will be given upon request to experts chosen for the expert groups on an individual basis, if they could not contribute otherwise. We expect this to apply to experts especially from eastern, central and southern European countries that might not able to join the activities otherwise. In case you require such support please contact the EKLIPSE secretariat (secretariat@eklipse-mechanism.eu).

6.4 Data and information policy

All results will be made publicly available through the EKLIPSE website and transparent procedures will apply, following Creative Commons Agreement 4.0[7], which includes the reference of authorship and involvement[9].

6.5 Information to provide

The EKLIPSE form should be completed, including a list of relevant publications and outlining relevant experience on the topic and details of experience in previous assessments or knowledge synthesis processes.

7 Application and notification of results

7.1 How to apply

The EKLIPSE expert form can be found on the EKLIPSE website under '**Open calls**'. The completed form should be completed in **by midnight on July 6th, 2018**. Should you require any further information do not hesitate to contact us: secretariat@eklipsemechanism.eu.

[7] See http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/. It permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided appropriate credit is given to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made.

7.2 Announcement of the results

Successful applicants will be notified directly by EKLIPSE KCB by **July 13th 2018**. As soon as they accept the nomination, names of selected experts will be made public on the EKLIPSE website.

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