



Bridging the gap between policy and knowledge
on biodiversity in Europe

CALL FOR EXPERTS (CfE 11/2022)
Eclipse – June 2022

Deadline for Call: **June 22th, 2022** before midnight (CEST) – **EXTENDED** -

Identified policy-relevant knowledge need requiring expertise:

Building on existing relevant work on research agendas and knowledge gap analysis, identifying interdisciplinary research [and action priorities that contribute to a strategic research agenda on biodiversity and pandemics addressing the critical interlinkages between relevant sectors needed to make future actions more effective.

Eclipse is inviting experts to join an Expert Working Group (EWG) to contribute to answer an identified policy-relevant knowledge need that requires an in-depth analysis or consolidated views from science and other knowledge holders: see formulation above and hereafter referred to as "Request (Biodiversity and Pandemics)". This request was initially put forward by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (EC-DG RTD) and has since been endorsed by a cross-sectoral consortium of relevant EC- Directorate Generals and key initiatives (hereafter referred to as "(Consortium of) Requesters" - see Table 1 in section 1.1), who jointly co-developed the evidence need and will contribute to the dissemination, policy uptake and impact of the outputs. For further information about the request, see the Eclipse website under Request > ["Biodiversity and pandemics"](#).

The EWG will cover diverse and complementary skills (including multi- and trans-disciplinary skills and broad geographical coverage – see section 5). The EWG will closely interact with relevant members of the [Eclipse governance bodies](#) to ensure appropriate methodological choices and uptake of outputs, as well





as to guide them through the ethical and robust [Eclipse process](#). Selected experts will have to comply with the [Eclipse Code of Ethics](#) to integrate the EWG.

In order to create this EWG, we are seeking expressions of interest from experts from a broad range of disciplines. Before applying, please consider the following questions below. Please consider the list of disciplines/expertise as non-exhaustive, as we are happy to consider others that you may think relevant to answer the request.

- **Are you an expert on one or several of the following disciplines?**
 - disease ecology, disease transmission in wildlife, zoonotic diseases, vector-borne diseases or studying spillover,
 - conservation medicine, wildlife health and conservation,
 - veterinary health, epidemiology and surveillance of infectious diseases, including zoonoses and vector-borne diseases, in domestic animals and at the interface with wildlife.
 - public and environmental health, epidemiology and prevention, exposome, emerging entities from changing environment
 - ecosystem functions and ecosystem services related to disease regulation
 - environmental law and governance of One Health national and international legislation and other documents (treaties, conventions) on biodiversity and health (global health, one health)
 - environmental/ecological economics, sustainable development, the integration of biodiversity and health (pandemics) in economics (ecological transition, trade)
- **Do you have either direct experience in knowledge synthesis or experience in qualitative research, and/or would you like to learn more about knowledge synthesis methods?**
- **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?**
- **Are you interested in collaborating in a trans-disciplinary and multi-cultural setting?**

Further information on the criteria can be found in section 5.

Please read the information below to apply to the call.

Important dates and information:

How to apply: <http://eklipse.eu/calls/>

Deadline to apply: June 22th, 2022, before midnight (CEST). – **EXTENDED** -

Expert Working Group (EWG) selection: week of June 20th 2022.

Online kick-off meeting and training of the EWG: 2 sessions of 2 hours each between June 29th and July 1st 2022

Expected duration of the process: Between 3 and 8 months, depending on the selected method(s) (see section 3).

The participation in this EWG will require **approximately 10% of your time** (see Eklipse [Guidance note n°6](#)). As in similar science-policy processes, Eklipse activities rely on in-kind contributions.

For further information on the request, please read the Document of Work (DoW) on the Eklipse website under Request > [“Biodiversity and pandemics”](#).

Should you require any further information or support, please contact the **Eklipse Management Body (EMB) at emb@eklipse.eu**






1. Request to be addressed by this call






1.1 Background to the request Biodiversity and Pandemics

The COVID-19 crisis has revealed how fragile and vulnerable our societies are to pandemics and how challenging informed political and policy responses become when faced with such an emergency. As a global community, we were not prepared. The potential risk of zoonoses linked to unprecedented land degradation and land conversion, unleashed consumption of natural resources, increasing livestock production, and acceleration of biodiversity loss had long been identified and did not come as a surprise to the scientific community. However, the pandemic has highlighted gaps in our knowledge and our ability to put this knowledge into practice through policy-making. Therefore, generating and synthesising knowledge to fill these gaps while also ensuring the uptake of knowledge into decision-making and implementation should become a high priority.

The request focuses on how to improve our understanding and application of the science of pandemics to optimise coordination and coherence across policy sectors, building better resilience and response strategies (proactive and reactive approaches) in the context of the interface between Biodiversity and Pandemics. Moreover, the creation of a cross-sectoral consortium of requesters working with EC-DG RTD, co-developing the knowledge needs and expecting the knowledge synthesis process results will ensure that the produced evidence will be jointly and timely taken up by policy (See Table 1 below).

Table 1: Consortium of Requesters

Requesters	Description	More information
DG Research and Innovation (EC-DG RTD)	Responsible for EU research agenda.	
DG Environment (EC - DG ENV)	Responsible for EU policy on the environment.	
DG Agriculture and Rural Development (EC-DG AGRI)	Responsible for EU policy and research on agriculture and rural development and deals with all aspects of the common agricultural policy (CAP).	

<p>PREZODE</p>	<p>International initiative with the ambition to understand the risks of the emergence of zoonotic infectious diseases and develop and implement innovative methods to improve prevention, early detection, and resilience to ensure rapid response to the risks of emerging infectious diseases of animal origin.</p>	
<p>One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP)</p>	<p>An initiative supported by the heads of FAO, OIE, UNEP and WHO, and the governments of France and Germany, to further enhance the cross-sectoral collaboration, enhance strategic orientations and coordination and provide high political visibility on the subject of One Health.</p> 	
<p>Norwegian Veterinary Institute (NRI)</p>	<p>Norwegian national biomedical institute delivers research-based knowledge and contingency support in animal health, fish health, and food safety.</p>	
<p>Project HERA (Health Environment Research Agenda for Europe)</p>	<p>EU funded project that involves 15 European countries, an international organisation and a European NGO, thus 24 partners in total who are working hard to prepare the Health and Environment Research Agenda 2020-2030. The aim was to set the priorities for an environment, climate and health research agenda in the EU5.</p>	

1.2 First screening of literature/initiatives and Open Call for Knowledge

A literature screening during the Scoping Phase resulted in a compilation of existing relevant literature, projects and initiatives:

- **(Non-exhaustive) Literature review collected by the Eclipse Management Body (EMB):**
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1H-7SoAVoEakUdrQyKiaOD8lrTNRUFv5fPwKBta-HOXA/edit?usp=sharing>
- **(Non-exhaustive) List of initiatives/projects/networks collected by the EMB:**
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/171PHarAsfRgK7ro9iEPURLjX74YwWuX4s4cvOPDLw2g/edit#gid=1770112322>

Following this first screening exercise, a Call for Knowledge (CfK 1/2021) related to this request was launched in November 2021 and was open until January 2022 (for more information, please refer to the Eclipse website under “[Calls](#)” on our website). The CfK 1/2021 was broadly disseminated through the different Eclipse social media platforms, i.e. LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram,



as well as via different mailing lists and networks. The screening and the call for knowledge aim to gather relevant knowledge to be considered during the selection process and to search for existing or planned initiatives that may (partly) answer the requests. Both activities were essential during the Scoping Phase to avoid duplication of ongoing efforts and ensure the outputs will be timely developed. For more details on the literature collected in the Call for Knowledge, see Annex 4 in Document of Work (DoW) published on the Eclipse website under **Request** > [“Biodiversity and pandemics”](#).



2. Suggested methods

Subject to discussion with the EWG, the request process was suggested to include a series of steps:

- Mapping of existing research agendas and knowledge gap analysis
- Filtering and analysing research recommendations related to Biodiversity and pandemics
- Prioritising the identified research recommendations based on their potential for maximising the impact on policies for relevant sectors.

During the scoping phase, the members of the [Eclipse Methods Expert Group \(MEG\)](#) discussed potential knowledge synthesis methods suitable for this request (more information on knowledge synthesis methods in [Dicks et al. 2018](#) and on the Eclipse website under the "[Methods](#)" webpage).

Methods suggested by the MEG

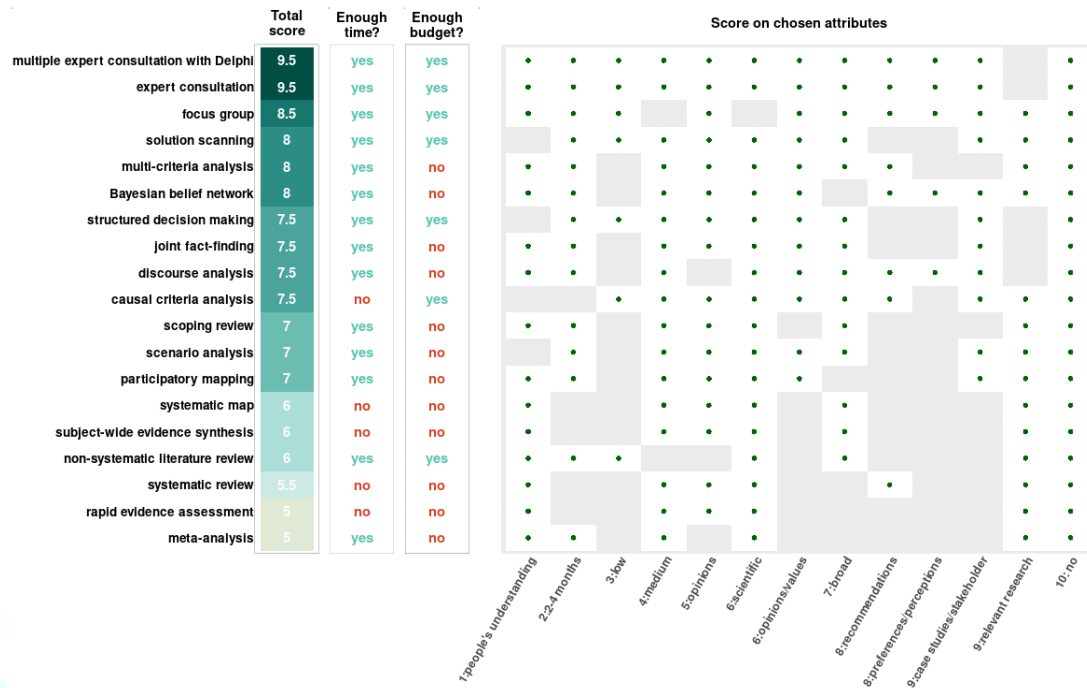
No single method addresses all the methodological challenges in the request "Biodiversity and Pandemics". Rather, a bundle of techniques will be needed to tackle three distinct knowledge synthesis aims:

- a. **Literature-based knowledge synthesis methods** to identify and assess published peer-reviewed literature, wider grey literature and policy documents. Methods include [systematic map](#); [scoping review](#); [systematic review](#); [rapid evidence review](#).
- b. **People-based knowledge synthesis methods** to access current activities setting research agendas. This involves a range of consultation methods, either as part of a wider deliberative process (method 3) or as a stand-alone process. Methods include [multiple expert consultations](#) involving a workshop or an online [Delphi process](#), or a series of [focus groups](#), with the aim of identifying and assessing what is currently being developed but not yet in the public domain.
- c. **People-based decision methods** to support prioritisation/decisions. This builds on stage 2 but aims to rank, sort or prioritise the research agenda items already identified. Methods include deliberative tools like the [Delphi process](#), or prioritisation or ranking techniques such as [multi-criteria decision analysis](#) (MCDA) or [structured decision making](#).

To help the EWG understand what tools might best address the three method pathways outlined above, the MEG recommends collectively using the [MAGICKS](#) tool. This guides a dialogue about the characteristics of the required knowledge synthesis, and prioritisation decisions matches these characteristics to the expected attributes of different methods and provides concise guidance on how to conduct each method. An example output is shown below in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Example of the use of MAGICKS (Method Application and Guidance in Conducting Knowledge Syntheses) to help guide the process of choosing a method of knowledge synthesis.



The final decision on which method or combination of methods will be used to process the request “Biodiversity and Pandemics” will be made after a thorough dialogue between the EWG and the MEG. The description and justification for the selected method(s) will be part of the first deliverable the EWG will have to deliver, i.e. the Method Protocol. All Eklipse Method Protocols are peer-reviewed, open for public consultation, and once revised, they are published on the Eklipse website (sometimes in scientific articles) and broadly disseminated.

For more information on the range of methods, please refer to the [Eklipse report](#) on knowledge synthesis methods.

3. Implementation steps and timeline

The work of the EWG is expected to follow the [Eklipse knowledge synthesis process](#). The Scoping Group has developed a provisional timeline to give an orientation of the milestones and duration of the answering process until the final outputs (see Table 2 below). A key component of the method protocol, the EWG will develop a refined timeline for answering the request considering the needs of the requesters, the relevant policy process(es), the complexity of the request and the selected tailored methods. Please note that a kick-off dialogue meeting between the Expert Working Group and the consortium of requester(s) will be held the last week of June (doodle will be sent to selected experts). This kick-off meeting will be facilitated by the [Eklipse Knowledge Coordination Body \(KCB\)](#) and aims to ensure a common understanding of the request among experts.

Table 2. Suggested timeline

Suggested timeline	Key activities	Actions or feedback from requesters
Last week of June Two sessions of 2 hours each between June 29th and July 1st 2022	Online kick-off meeting of the EWG	Participation in the first part of the meeting to explain the specific interest in the request and answer key questions of clarifications from the experts
The second week of September	Call for Open consultation and Peer Review of the Methodological Protocol	Dissemination of the call Requesters can submit a review
<u>Duration of the answering phase of the Eklipse process</u> Between 3 and 8 months, depending on the selected method(s)	Call for Open consultation and Peer Review of the synthesis report	Dissemination of the call Requesters can submit a review
	Launch of the final report	Dissemination and contribution to ensure the uptake of the evidence produced by EWG by research and policy, i.e. ensuring the usefulness of the results /evidence



4. Support provided by Eklipse

Eklipse team: The Expert Working Group (EWG) will be supported in all steps by the [Eklipse Management Body](#) (EMB) in logistics, communication, documentation (via the Eklipse website), and dissemination of products required for this request. The working group will be supported thematically and strategically by the [Knowledge Coordination Body](#) (KCB) and the [Methods Expert Group](#) (MEG) on the choice and use of knowledge synthesis methods.

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 and beyond the group, capacity building and the visibility of expertise to policy and society via the products. Eklipse will actively support the visibility of experts and their institution's contributions. In addition, travel costs to potential events hosted physically by Eklipse will be covered via Eklipse funds as needed (depending on travel restrictions following lockdown development).

Technical support: Access to literature databases will be facilitated if needed. Eklipse will cover the layout, printing, and dissemination of interim and final products.

5. Eligibility and applicant information

a. Selection criteria for the composition of the Expert Working Group (EWG)

The EWG is the group of selected experts that will be in charge of answering the request “Biodiversity and Pandemics” based on the [Eclipse process](#). They are individual experts who will nominate themselves following the call for experts. The final selection of the EWG will be carried out by the Knowledge Coordination Body (KCB), which will ensure the best possible coverage in terms of disciplines, geographic and gender balance (see [Guidance note 7c. “Preparing and managing Calls for Experts”](#) for more information). The selected EWG will consist of scientists and practitioners and will be supported by dedicated members from the KCB, the MEG and the EMB (see [Guidance Note 6. “Expert working groups \(EWGs\)”](#)). As in similar science-policy processes, Eclipse activities rely on in-kind contributions. The EWG 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. KCB may decide to open a follow-up, more tailored Call for Experts to this one to complement the EWG with additional expertise.

The working group is expected to have between 10 and 15 experts.

b. Selection criteria for individual experts

- The individual experts that nominate themselves should have demonstrated expertise or experience in one or several of the following disciplines:
 - disease ecology, disease transmission in wildlife, zoonotic diseases, vector-borne diseases or studying spillover,
 - conservation medicine, wildlife health and conservation,
 - veterinary health, epidemiology and surveillance of infectious diseases, including zoonoses and vector-borne diseases, in domestic animals and at the interface with wildlife.
 - public and environmental health, epidemiology and prevention, exposome, emerging entities from changing environment
 - ecosystem functions and ecosystem services related to disease regulation
 - environmental law and governance of One Health national and international legislation and other documents (treaties, conventions) on biodiversity and health (global health, one health)
 - environmental/ecological economics, sustainable development, the integration of biodiversity and health (pandemics) in economics (ecological transition, trade)

- Some individual experts of the EWG should have **either direct experience** in knowledge synthesis or experience in qualitative research. Specific techniques/experiences that are especially valued include:
 - Systematic Review



- Systematic mapping
- Multi-criteria decision analysis
- Delphi
- Semi-structured interviews
- Focus groups
- Workshops

Experience in **European policy processes** will be regarded during the selection discussion.

Important information:

- Eklipse highly encourages all applicants to provide a **letter of support from their organisation**.
- Selected Experts will have to comply with the principles and rules of Eklipse: e.g. conflicts of interest policy, Code of Conduct, etc. (for more details, see the Eklipse website under [“Ethical framework”](#)).
- Invited participants to the Focus Group, as well as Eklipse KCB and EMB members, are **not eligible**. Please note that two members of Eklipse MEG with relevant knowledge synthesis methods will be selected from the MEG team to integrate the EWG but will not need to apply to the Call for Experts. Please note that the MEG is composed of experts selected for a mandate of 3 years to integrate EWGs.

a. **Data and information policy**

All results will be made publicly available through the Eklipse website, and transparent procedures will apply, following Creative Commons Agreement 4.0¹, which includes the reference of authorship and involvement.

b. **Information to provide**

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

Eklipse highly encourages all applicants to provide a letter of support from your organisation.

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6. Application and notification of results

a. How to apply

The Eklipse application form can be found on the website under [“Open calls”](#). The completed form should be completed **by midnight on June 22th 2021 (EXTENDED)**. Should you require any further information, do not hesitate to contact us: emb@eklipse.eu

b. Announcement of the results

Successful applicants will be notified directly by Eklipse Management Body (EMB) during **the week of June 20th, 2022**. As soon as they accept the nomination, selected experts' names will be made public on the Eklipse website.

