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Today, the Commission is announcing an **investment of over €110 million** into LIFE programme integrated projects for environmental and climate protection, selected after a call for proposals covering the year 2020. The funding will support new major **environmental and climate projects** in 11 EU countries – **Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovenia**. The projects contribute to a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and support the European Green Deal's objectives of making the EU climate neutral and zero-pollution by 2050. They are examples of actions to deliver key European Green Deal objectives under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the EU Circular Economy Action Plan.

Executive Vice-President responsible for the European Green Deal Frans **Timmermans** said: *"We have no time to waste when it comes to the climate, biodiversity and pollution crises. The LIFE programme provides direct support to projects across the EU and enables entire countries and regions to protect and restore nature. Nature is our biggest ally and we need to take care of it so it can take care of us. My congratulations to each of the projects selected today."*

Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Virginijus **Sinkevičius** added: *"LIFE Programme integrated projects is one of the main tools to make the green transition a reality by delivering targeted changes on the ground. Through these projects, Member States can green their economies, bring back nature and biodiversity, and improve their resilience. I am looking forward to seeing the benefits that this investment will bring in the 11 countries and beyond their borders."*

Integrated projects allow Member States to pool additional EU funding sources, including agricultural, structural, regional and research funds, as well as national funding and private sector investment. Altogether, the 11 projects are expected to **attract more than €10 billion of complementary funds**, significantly multiplying the resources allocated today to make a real difference on the ground.

Delivering Green Deal objectives on the ground

Nature conservation: A project in France will introduce measures to halt and reverse biodiversity decline in the Grand Est region by, for instance, setting up three pilot forest areas. Another project will mitigate the adverse effects of human activities that threaten Finland's marine and coastal biodiversity, by monitoring and improving the management of the national network of Marine Protected Areas. These projects will help deliver the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Clean air: A project in Poland will implement measures to improve overall air quality in the region of Silesia where air pollution is among the most severe in Europe, by replacing small-scale solid-fuel domestic heating devices with less polluting alternatives. This project contributes to the EU's 2030 greenhouse gas emission targets and the Zero Pollution Action Plan.

Waste management: In Cyprus, a project will aim to improve the infrastructure and collection systems for recyclable and biodegradable waste. In Latvia, the focus will be on improving separate waste collection and reuse of municipal waste. In Denmark, a project will work on waste prevention and on setting up a better waste regulatory framework. The project in Slovenia will aim to achieve a better recycling rate of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste, among other actions. In total, four projects will focus on waste prevention and recovering resources, contributing to the goals of the EU's Circular Economy Action Plan and the Waste Framework Directive.

Climate change mitigation: LIFE funding will help Lithuania reach the objectives set out in its national energy and climate plan (NECP) including more efficient buildings, climate-friendly mobility, an energy-saving industry, and enhanced green public procurement. In Estonia, various tools and solutions will be created for the deep renovations on a range of buildings in three cities, which can then be replicated across Estonia and other Member States and support the EU's Renovation Wave Strategy.

Climate change adaptation: In the Netherlands, LIFE funding will help stimulate climate change adaptation across several sectors: water management, infrastructure, agriculture, nature, health and spatial/urban planning. A project in the Moravian-Silesian Region in Czechia will increase the region's climate resilience, improve the quality of the environment for inhabitants and support sustainable development. Both projects will be following the goals of the EU's Adaptation Strategy.

Find out more about the 11 integrated projects in the short descriptions.

Background

The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action. It has been running since 1992 and has co-financed more than 5 500 projects across the EU and beyond. The Commission has increased LIFE programme funding by almost 60% for the 2021-2027 period. It now stands at €5.4 billion. LIFE has currently four sub-programmes: nature and biodiversity, circular economy and quality of life, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and clean energy transition.

The LIFE programme provides funding for integrated projects. These projects support the implementation of EU environmental and climate legislation and policies, on regional, multi-



EU invests over €110 million in life projects for environment and climate in 11 EU countries

regional, national or trans-national level. Integrated projects help Member States comply with key EU legislation in six areas: nature conservation, water, air, waste management, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation, European Sting writes.