

## Topic Section 1 - Water Management in The Nexus

TABLE 4 SPECIFIC CONDITIONS FOR THE CALL 1.1.1

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| <b>Thematic Area-1 Water management in the Nexus</b>                              |  |
| <b>Topic 1.1.1-2025</b>   | <b>Upscaling Nature Based Solutions for sustainable water management to address extreme events in the Mediterranean</b>  |
| <b>Contribution to SRIA</b>   | Operational Objective:<br>2/LAND AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY<br>4/SMART AND SUSTAINABLE FARMING.  |
| <b>Contribution to EU policies</b>  | <a href="#">European Green Deal</a> , <a href="#">EU biodiversity strategy for 2030</a> , <a href="#">EU Adaptation Strategy</a> , <a href="#">Nature Restoration Law</a> , <a href="#">European Water Resilience Strategy</a> |

### CALL SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

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| <b>Expected EU contribution per project</b>               | PRIMA estimates that a contribution of around <b>EUR 2.725 million</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.  |
| <b>Indicative budget</b>                                  | The total indicative budget for the topic is <b>EUR 10.9 million</b>   |
| <b>Duration</b>   | PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.  |
| <b>Type of Action</b>                                     | Innovation Action (IA)   |
| <b>Technology Readiness levels (TRL)</b>                  | Activities are expected to achieve TRL 6-8 by the end of the project. Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <b>Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</b> of their proposal.   |
| <b>Eligibility conditions</b>                             | Please refer to <b>PRIMA Work Programme 2025 General Annexes</b> Section <a href="#">Entities eligible for funding</a> .<br><br>Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the standard eligibility conditions section, in this Work Programme, consortia must include at least an additional legal entity established in a <a href="#">Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC)</a> .<br><br><b>Additional Eligibility Condition for this call</b><br>Due to the scope of this topic, consortia must include at least one small and medium-sized enterprises <sup>17</sup> established in a PS in the research consortia. |
| <b>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</b> | <a href="#">PRIMA MGA</a> (multi-beneficiary), based on <a href="#">Horizon Europe MGA</a> . The rules are described in the PRIMA Work Programme 2025 General Annexes section.   |
| <b>Submission and evaluation procedure</b>                | <b>The call will be organised according to a single-stage submission process.</b> A full proposal (maximum 45 pages) must be submitted according to the timeline for submitting application (Table 6). A timeline for submitting and evaluating applications can be found in <a href="#">Section 1, Calendar of the Calls</a> .  |
| <b>Consortium agreement</b>                               | Participants in projects resulting from this call for Proposals must conclude a consortium agreement before the PRIMA grant agreement's signature.   |
| <b>PRIMA specific KPIs</b>                                | Applicants must select <b>at least three</b> PRIMA-specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from <b>Table 2: PRIMA-specific KPIs, Linked Operational Objectives, and Descriptions</b> .<br><br>A <b>KPI Handbook</b> will be available at the call opening, detailing descriptions, data collection methods, and targets for each KPI to help applicants align selections with their project goals. Additionally, applicants propose <b>custom KPIs</b> to capture project-specific impacts that align with PRIMA's objectives for enhanced impact measurement.  |

**Expected Outcomes:** Aligned with the priorities of the European Green Deal, including the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030, as well as the EU climate adaptation and mitigation ambitions for

<sup>17</sup> 'Small or medium-sized enterprise' or 'SME' means a micro, small or medium-sized enterprise as defined in Article 2 of the Annex to Recommendation 2003/361/EC (27)

2030 and 2050, successful proposals will focus on scaling up Nature-based Solutions<sup>18</sup> (NBS). These solutions will enhance water security and improve the management of water-related risks amidst a changing climate, emphasising principles such as green, blue, and circular approaches (e.g., [Natural Water Retention Measures, NWRMs](#)) to mitigate the impacts of extreme events and water pollution.

**Project results are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:**

- Improved water management, enhanced climate resilience and adaptive capacity of ecosystems and communities<sup>19</sup> through the implementation of cost-effective Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)
- Increased knowledge sharing and capacity building among stakeholders at all levels to effectively design, implement, and maintain NBS.
- Improved monitoring and evaluation systems for continuous enhancement of NBS leading to their integration into environmental, agricultural, and urban planning policies, as well as climate adaptation and mitigation and environmental protection strategies, supported by innovative governance frameworks.

**Scope:** Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) are pivotal in mitigating the effects of extreme events and water pollution in the Mediterranean by enhancing ecosystem resilience and promoting sustainable adaptation strategies. Despite their well-recognised importance, several key challenges remain. Evidence on the cost-efficiency and socio-cultural impacts of NBS is still fragmented, and there is a notable lack of holistic approaches and guidelines for their uptake at large catchment scales.

Moreover, there is a pressing need to demonstrate the effectiveness of combining different types of NBS. This includes showcasing their multiple benefits in addressing a range of challenges, such as salinity management and pollution control, especially from diffuse sources (e.g., agriculture). For instance, certain vegetation types can play a significant role in improving water quality by filtering pollutants and enhancing ecosystem health. Effective integration of these solutions is crucial for managing both salinity and pollution, thus providing comprehensive and sustainable responses to the diverse environmental challenges faced in the Mediterranean region.

**The successful proposals should cover at least one of the following aspects:**

- Identify existing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) tailored to the diverse ecological and socio-economic contexts of the Mediterranean region to address risks like floods, droughts, water pollution and other hazards, as well as the barriers to their acceptance, with the aim to re-define regulatory frameworks accordingly.
- Test, validate, assess cost-effectiveness and benefits, and scale up NBS in diverse Mediterranean contexts (i.e., urban and rural scenarios), to mitigate droughts, floods, water pollution, heat waves, storms, while improving ecosystem biodiversity and resilience, recharge aquifer and preventing soil salinisation and erosion.

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<sup>18</sup> PRIMA defines nature-based solutions as "Actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits" (UNEA/EA.5/Res.5).

<sup>19</sup> "Communities" in this context refers to groups of people living in specific geographic areas, such as towns, cities, or rural areas. It can encompass both human communities (e.g., residents, farmers, businesses) and ecological communities (e.g., wildlife, plant species) within a particular region. The term can also imply local administrations or regional stakeholders who are involved in decision-making and governance related to environmental management and water resources

- Formulate new business models, governance approaches, and recommendations tailored for the Mediterranean region to promote widespread NBS adoption and their integration into existing policies, environmental and land use regulations.
- Explore combined NBS: A system of NBS interventions and also highlight the potential to combine NBS with other kinds of solutions/interventions (hybrid infrastructure).
- Develop decision-support tools for optimising NBS selection based on environmental conditions and stakeholder needs.

Proposals should actively implement a [Multi-Actor Approach \(MAA\)](#), engaging a wide range of stakeholders—including researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and end-users—throughout the project lifecycle to ensure relevance and impact. Additionally, **policy briefs** are encouraged as key outputs, distilling research findings into actionable insights for decision-makers.

Projects should establish links with the [EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change](#) by including dedicated tasks and resources for coordination and joint activities with relevant Mission-funded projects. Proposals should also allocate resources for collaboration with other PRIMA and EU-funded initiatives, [Network Nature](#) and its Task Forces, and European Partnerships like [Water4All](#), to participate in joint communication and dissemination activities.