

Proposals should capitalise on existing relevant research findings and tools. Proposals should also ensure synergies with other relevant EU-funded studies, projects, initiatives, and processes²⁴⁷.

This topic should involve the effective contribution of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) disciplines.

HORIZON-CL6-2025-03-GOVERNANCE-02: Upscaling innovative payments to support farmers in the delivery of agri-environment-climate public goods

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| Call: Cluster 6 Call 03 - single stage | |
| Specific conditions | |
| <i>Expected EU contribution per project</i> | The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 6.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts. |
| <i>Indicative budget</i> | The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 12.00 million. |
| <i>Type of Action</i> | Innovation Actions |
| <i>Eligibility conditions</i> | <p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The Joint Research Centre (JRC) may participate as member of the consortium selected for funding.</p> <p>The following additional eligibility criteria apply: The proposals must use the multi-actor approach. See definition of the multi-actor approach in the introduction to this Work Programme part.</p> |
| <i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i> | <p>The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.</p> |

Expected Outcome: In line with the climate action and biodiversity objectives of the Green Deal and the common agricultural policy (CAP), the successful proposal will contribute to the development and uptake of effective governance and competitive business models. This will be based on the upscaling of innovative payment mechanisms with result-based and/or collective and/or spatially coordinated approaches supporting the provision of environmental services by farmers and the transition to more resilient and sustainable farming systems. The

²⁴⁷ e.g., producer organisations operational programmes, the EU Agri-Food Chain Observatory, fi-compass, etc.

successful proposal will contribute to the impact of this destination on just societal transformation, community empowerment and societal participation in support to the green transition.

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- policymakers, businesses, farmers, and other relevant stakeholders have a clear understanding of the role environmental services play in a flourishing society, and engage in payment for environmental services schemes with result-based and/or collective and/or spatially coordinated approaches with the governance perspective of ensuring long-term financing capacity at scale;
- policymakers, businesses, farmers, and other relevant stakeholders have improved knowledge and innovative tools to develop, implement and upscale payment for environmental services schemes with result-based and/or collective and/or spatially coordinated approaches adapted to the diverse contexts. Farmers and businesses from diverse farming contexts widely participate on a long-term basis in innovative payment for environmental services schemes with result-based and/or collective and/or spatially coordinated approaches;
- society at large benefit from more targeted support towards the delivery of agri-environment-climate public goods with positive social, economic, biodiversity and climate outcomes.

Scope: Payments for environmental services are economic incentives recognizing and supporting farmers for voluntary interventions that contribute to the provision of public goods²⁴⁸. Research and practical experiences from a diversity of initiatives from the public and private sector, provided evidence and guidance on cost-effective and well-contextualised design to support practitioners. Implementing more result-based, collective or spatially coordinated approaches in payment conditionality rules are among the key recommendations to best achieve impacts. While some Member States integrated such approaches in the design of some eco-schemes and agri-environment-climate measures in the CAP, important barriers to the upscaling and long-term implementation remain to be overcome. Building sufficient institutional, monitoring, funding and financing capacity are necessary to increase synergies between economic viability, environmental effectiveness and longevity. This strengthened capacity would support the achievement of more sustainable and positive social, economic, climate and biodiversity outcomes effectively contributing to the Green Deal objectives. Mobilising more the private sector in those innovative payment for environmental services schemes would contribute to address those barriers.

Proposals should:

²⁴⁸ e.g., climate change mitigation, soil functionality, biodiversity, water quality and water availability preservation and restoration, resilience to extreme weather events, animal welfare, etc.

- develop and/or improve, test, pilot and evaluate payment for environmental services schemes with result-based and/or collective and/or spatially coordinated approaches in real-life conditions considering a diversity of farming contexts;
- put a special focus on mobilising private funding (e.g., value chain approaches, market-based instruments, crowdfunding, bottom-up approaches, etc.) and assessing the social and economic implications of the schemes with the perspective of long-term implementation and financial viability under different scenarios and socio-economic contexts;
- based on an analysis of the role of agriculture and food value chains in supporting and valorising farmers' provision of environmental services, develop and/or improve approaches supporting a just and fair remuneration of farmers for these services;
- develop and/or improve and apply robust and cost-effective monitoring of the environmental services provided by farmers;
- identify barriers and enablers for the implementation and upscaling of payment for environmental services schemes with result-based and/or collective and/or spatially coordinated approaches and propose effective solutions to address them. Special attention should be given to not repeat but build on and complement the state-of-the art;
- support capacity building, training, reskilling, and education, in particular on the technical, financial, legal and administrative implications of contractual arrangements, enabling farmers and other involved practitioners, including the private sector, to implement the proposed solutions.

Proposals should ensure complementarities with ongoing relevant Horizon Europe projects including from the Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe” and capitalise on existing relevant research findings and tools. Proposals should also ensure synergies with other relevant LIFE projects, EU-funded studies, pilot projects, and processes ²⁴⁹.

Proposals should include a dedicated task, appropriate resources and a plan on how they will collaborate with other projects selected under this topic (e.g., by participating in joint activities, workshops, as well as common communication and dissemination activities, etc.).

The JRC participation could involve contributing to the testing of payment for environmental services schemes via experiments.

Proposals must implement the ‘multi-actor approach’, with a consortium based on a balanced mix of actors with complementary knowledge, including farmers, researchers, and businesses. Involvement of SMEs, in particular of farmers, for developing, improving, testing and/or piloting the proposed solutions is strongly encouraged. As an option, proposals may provide financial support to third parties (FSTP) to facilitate the engagement of SMEs in testing and/or piloting the proposed solutions. A maximum of 10% of the EU funding should be

²⁴⁹ e.g., rural development programmes, EU-wide certification scheme for carbon removals, etc.

allocated to this purpose. In this case, consortia need to define the selection process of entities, for which financial support may be granted.

This topic should involve the effective contribution of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) disciplines.

HORIZON-CL6-2025-03-GOVERNANCE-03: Boosting the attractiveness of agriculture and the connection between the farming community and society

| Call: Cluster 6 Call 03 - single stage | |
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| Specific conditions | |
| <i>Expected EU contribution per project</i> | The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 6.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts. |
| <i>Indicative budget</i> | The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 12.00 million. |
| <i>Type of Action</i> | Research and Innovation Actions |
| <i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i> | <p>The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). ²⁵⁰.</p> |

Expected Outcome: In line with the objectives of the Vision for Agriculture and food and the common agricultural policy (CAP), to support generational renewal, to promote fair jobs and social inclusion for farmers, the successful proposal will support the impact of this Destination related to the development of innovative governance models by providing strong evidence-informed knowledge and analytical capacity to support the development and implementation of effective policies, in particular the CAP post 2027.

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- the perception of and the communication on agriculture as economic activity and profession are assessed and enhanced to boost the attractiveness of the sector for new

²⁵⁰ This [decision](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf) is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under ‘Simplified costs decisions’ or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf