(English version)

Question for written answer E-004351/25
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (Renew)
(5 November 2025)

Subject: Future of the LIFE programme in the next multiannual financial framework and implications for national nature restoration plans

The LIFE programme is the EU's only funding instrument dedicated entirely to environment, nature and climate action. In the draft proposal for the next multiannual financial framework (MFF 2028-2034), LIFE reportedly no longer appears as a standalone programme. Instead, its funds would be merged into broader instruments, creating uncertainty over the continuity of direct EU support for nature restoration projects.

Member States are currently preparing national level nature restoration plans that rely, at least in part, on expected EU co-financing from the LIFE programme. The disappearance or restructuring of the LIFE programme risks creating a significant gap in financing and undermining progress towards the objectives of the Nature Restoration Regulation.

1. Has the Commission assessed how discarding dedicated nature funding under LIFE could affect the ability of Member States to finance and implement their restoration plans?

2. What concrete steps will the Commission take to ensure that Member States have clarity and sufficient funding to meet EU nature restoration targets before their financing plans are finalised later this year?

Submitted: 5.11.2025

Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(13 January 2026)

The Commission proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) ([1]) includes an ambitious 35% climate and environment spending target, aiming at mobilising over EUR 700 billion, including for biodiversity and nature restoration. The EU budget will offer significant opportunities to support EU Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) ([2]) activities in the 2028-2034 period, compatible with a streamlined structure of the next MFF.

LIFE is broadly recognised for its crucial role in advancing environmental, climate and energy objectives. To ensure continuity, the Commission has proposed that under the next MFF, LIFE activities can be funded both as part of the National and Regional Partnership Fund and through the European Competitiveness Fund.

The Commission is aware of the questions from Member States when preparing the financing components of their national restoration plans. The uniform format ([3]) offers Member States a clear and user-friendly structure that streamlines planning and reduces administrative burden. Thanks to its harmonised structure, it ensures comparability and coherence across national restoration plans, while also helping to build a coherent pipeline of restoration measures.

Work with the Expert Group on the Nature Restoration Regulation ([4]) will help to ensure that the modalities of the Commission's assessment support realistic and coherent financial planning in the preparation of the national restoration plans.

([1]) https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/eu-budget-2028-2034_en.
([2]) Regulation (EU) 2021/783 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE), and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013, OJ L 172, 17.05.2021, p.53.
([3]) Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/912.
([4]) Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869, OJ L, 2024/1991, 29.7.2024.