



An introduction to the LIFE monitoring team
Lynne Barratt
External Monitoring Team – ELMEN (Particip-UK)



The External Monitoring Team: Who we are

- We are now ELMEN – formerly NEEMO
- Support CINEA in the management of ongoing LIFE projects
- National know-how and language skills
- Specialist knowledge on a range of topics
- Evaluation of performance and results
- To enable a deeper understanding of the Project
- Each Project has an assigned monitor



- ELMEN Is a consortium formed specially for the purposes of monitoring LIFE projects
- Been through several changes since 2002
- 7 Partner Firms (we are now with Particip UK)
 - Coordination is from Brussels
 - Administration is in Freiburg
- Partners with Ernst & Young Prague
- Communications now separate





Changes in 2023



THE HELP DESK



- Not based in India! And not manned by robots!
- Make sure you have the right people registered to the Help Desk access
- 3 categories of question
 - Administration
 - Financial
 - Technical/Contractual
- Raise a ticket for each issue – try not to mix requests
- You will get a response within 2 working days
- Regional response followed up by assigned monitor response
- Choose the method you would like to get your response
- If complex question may need to follow up e.g. amendment
- Please leave feedback

Reports and Evaluations

- You will only report at Mid Term and Final Report stage
- This is the only time that we will evaluate your progress
- We will no longer review your draft reports prior to submission
 - Look on the LIFE website for examples
 - Follow the template religiously
 - Start well in advance
- Financial matters will continue to be checked but less frequently
- Deliverables will only be assessed with formal report
- Remember to submit everything through the e-tender portal
- Please leave feedback



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Visits to the project



We now only visit the project 3 times

- Initial (virtual)
- Mid Term (prior to report submission)
- End of Project (prior to final report submission)

Mid term visit is likely to be a joint visit with your PA

We have less time on site than previously

Verification of on the ground impact



Top tips for a good proposal



Project Duration

Project duration too short – about 50% of projects apply for a project extension – this is a formal amendment to the contract

- **Internal Factors**

- Project manager hired late
- Coordination effort with many partners
- Changes in employees or partners
- Overload of project manager (under-resourcing)

- **External Factors**

- Approval processes
- Tenders
- Seasonal limitations
- Weather
- Supply chains
- Pandemics!



Plan a buffer time



Project Management

- **Adherence to the project plan** use project management tools.
- **Risk** - identify and then mitigate (mitigation plan) include all partners in the risk assessment!
- **Resources** – make sure the human and financial resources are sufficient to undertake the work packages
- **Milestones and deliverables** – know the difference – don't have too many!
- **Objectives** - do not over-promise – keep them realistic
- **Coherence** – do the work packages fit together well?
- **Sustainability** – think carefully about how the project can be sustained and replicated at the end



Project Partners

No typical structure, no right or wrong

- **Partnership** – have you got the right mix? Too few/too many? Concentrate on essential partners
- **Awareness** – do your partners know what is expected of them administratively? Its not just about the money! Show them the draft PA In advance.
- **The Money** – check your partner 's financial credentials! Are they good for their contributions?
- **Sharing** – make partners aware when they sign how and when they will get their share of EU finance
- **Other EU MS partners** – need more effort to coordinate, communications in difference languages

Budget

No typical budget ENV tends to be smaller than NAT
trending upwards

- **Personnel costs too low** – make daily rates reasonable for your organisation – make sure that the staff resources are (more than) adequate
- **Plan** – the budget needs to include project management costs and financial management costs (admin costs often under-estimated)
- **External assistance** - you may need extra (financial) support if the project has partners in other member states (different rules may apply)
- **Inflation** – build this in especially if major purchases are expected at the end of the project
- **Cost increases** - there is no contingency – think about what might go wrong (energy, raw materials, pandemics!)

Practical information about the application

DELIVERABLES = PRODUCTS

- Reports
- Action Plans
- Training Materials
- Videos

MILESTONES = STAGES REACHED

- Permissions granted
- Systems built
- Restoring x ha out of y
- Stakeholder consultations

Focus on key deliverables – keep it simple – don't have them all at the end of the project if possible



Permits and permissions

- Approval procedures often take longer than you think.
- If you can get agreements with authorities in advance then do so
- Do you need to get the relevant authority on board as a partner?
- The costs for permits can escalate – be realistic
- Install the necessary human resources and time buffers to deal with all eventualities
- If you are buying land – pre-negotiate with land owners
- Try to avoid working in areas under multiple ownership



Thank you and Good Luck!