



LIFE MAPPER

MAPPING, PROTECTING, AND RESTORING MARINE ECOSYSTEMS



**LIFE
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MAPPING, PROTECTING, AND RESTORING MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

LIFE24-PRE-IT-LIFE-MAPPER

Guidelines for **MAP**ping, **ProtE**cting, and **Restor**ing Marine Ecosystems

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Executive Summary

LIFE-MAPPER seeks to bring together and harmonise existing knowledge, tools, and proven approaches in habitat mapping, biodiversity conservation, and marine ecosystem restoration. The project's goal is to strengthen the ability of stakeholders to design and carry out effective conservation and restoration actions across European seas.

The consortium places a strong emphasis on environmental responsibility throughout all stages of project implementation. Although the main focus lies on mapping, conservation, and restoration strategies, it also recognises that everyday operational choices – including the purchase of goods, services, consumables, and travel arrangements – contribute to the project's environmental footprint.

To reduce this impact, LIFE-MAPPER will consistently adopt the principles of Green Public Procurement (GPP) as a practical and adaptable framework for guiding procurement, ensuring alignment with EU standards and sustainability objectives.

This document describes the LIFE-MAPPER key commitments.



Table of contents

1. PROJECT COMMITMENT TO GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (GPP)	1
2. PRACTICAL APPLICATION IN LIFE MAPPER	2
3. CONCLUSION	3
REFERENCES	3

List of Tables

Table 1 - Indicative Green Public Procurement (GPP) measures foreseen within LIFE MAPPER, organised by procurement category. The examples are non-binding and intended as practical guidance to minimise the environmental footprint of project operations. 2



1. Project commitment to Green Public Procurement (GPP)

The LIFE MAPPER consortium is committed to integrating environmental responsibility into all aspects of project implementation. While the main objectives of the project concern habitat mapping, conservation and restoration planning, the consortium recognises that operational choices – including the procurement of goods, services, consumables and travels – also have an environmental footprint.

To minimise this footprint, the consortium will apply Green Public Procurement (GPP) principles throughout the project. These principles, developed at EU level to encourage environmentally sustainable purchasing, will serve as a flexible framework guiding partners in their procurement decisions (European Commission, 2023a). The consortium commits to the following guidelines:

- **Life-cycle approach:** all procurement decisions will consider the environmental impacts of products and services across their life cycle – from production and transport to use and end-of-life. This ensures that goods and services with lower overall impact are prioritised, even if their initial cost is higher (European Commission, 2008).
- **Environmental criteria in specifications:** technical specifications and award criteria will, where relevant, incorporate established EU GPP criteria for the relevant product or service category. This provides clear, measurable and verifiable requirements aligned with EU best practices (European Commission, 2023a).
- **Eco-labels and certifications:** preference will be given to products and services bearing recognised labels, such as the EU Ecolabel, in line with Art. 43 of Directive 2014/24/EU, which allows the use of labels in procurement provided that equivalent labels or other forms of proof are accepted. Evaluation of bids will also reflect Art. 67 of the same Directive, which establishes that the most economically advantageous tender may include environmental and life-cycle criteria in addition to price and quality.
- **Supplier engagement:** bidders demonstrating robust environmental management practices will be given preferential consideration, provided that such criteria are proportionate and directly related to the subject of the contract. For instance, service providers holding EMAS registration or equivalent certifications may receive additional merit in the evaluation process (European Commission, 2023b).
- **Monitoring and compliance:** where green requirements are included in contracts, compliance will be monitored during execution. This may include checking packaging materials, confirming the use of eco-friendly consumables, or verifying energy performance certificates for equipment.

By embedding these commitments, LIFE MAPPER procurement is conducted responsibly, with tangible measures to reduce environmental impacts while maintaining efficiency and consistency with the project's objectives.

2. Practical application in LIFE MAPPER

The following categories (Table 1) represent the main areas of expenditure in the project. For each, indicative GPP measures are proposed, building on EU GPP criteria and guidance (European Commission, 2023a).

Table 1 - Indicative Green Public Procurement (GPP) measures foreseen within LIFE MAPPER, organised by procurement category. The examples are non-binding and intended as practical guidance to minimise the environmental footprint of project operations.

Category	Indicative GPP Measures
Equipment (scientific instruments, IT hardware)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procure equipment meeting high energy-efficiency standards (e.g. Eco-design compliance); - Apply life cycle costing to account for energy use, maintenance, and disposal; - Prefer durable, repairable and recyclable products; - Choose devices with EU Ecolabel when available, in line with the European Commission’s EU Ecolabel Guidance (2023c).
Subcontracted Services (studies, consulting, events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate bidders’ environmental management systems (EMAS, ISO 14001); - Include performance clauses requiring waste reduction and sustainable event management (e.g. avoiding single-use plastics, providing vegetarian catering options); - Require sustainable printing (recycled paper, EU Ecolabel-certified inks).
Travel and Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimise travel by prioritising online meetings; - When travel is essential, prefer low-carbon modes (trains, public transport, hybrid or electric vehicles); - Encourage economy class for flights and grouping of tasks into single trips.
Consumables and Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use recycled or eco-certified paper and stationery; - Minimise packaging and avoid single-use plastics.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Procure EU Ecolabel-certified cleaning and maintenance products, as recommended by the EU Ecolabel Guidance (European Commission, 2023c);- Promote reuse and digital solutions to reduce overall consumption.
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3. Conclusion

By applying Green Public Procurement principles in all categories of expenditure, LIFE MAPPER demonstrates its commitment to sustainability not only in scientific outputs but also in internal management. The consortium will align procurement practices with EU GPP guidance (European Commission, 2023a), favour suppliers with strong environmental credentials, and ensure that resources are used efficiently across the project's duration. This approach reduces the environmental footprint of the project, supports the EU Green Deal objectives, and ensures coherence with broader European policies on sustainable consumption and production.

References

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