

Project 101215969 - LIFE24-NAT-IT-LIFE terrAmare

Deliverable 1.1 - Green Procurement Procedure

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<i>Abstract (for dissemination)</i>	This document defines the Green Public Procurement (GPP) strategy of the LIFE terrAmare project, with the aim of integrating environmental criteria into the procurement procedures of all project beneficiaries.
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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL FRAMEWORK, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF APPLICATION

1.1 Introduction and objectives of the document

This document defines the Green Public Procurement (GPP) strategy for the LIFE terrAmare project, identified by Grant Agreement No. 101215969. Within an initiative specifically dedicated to the conservation of coastal and marine habitats of the Natura 2000 Network, the adoption of environmentally sustainable operational standards is not only an administrative requirement but also a matter of scientific and environmental coherence.

The primary objective of this manual is to provide the twelve beneficiaries of the consortium with a common operational framework for the integration of environmental criteria into procurement procedures. The document aims to systematically minimise the use of non-renewable resources and the generation of waste, while ensuring that all declared expenditures are fully eligible and compliant with the principles of economy and efficiency set out in the Grant Agreement.

Furthermore, the procedure pursues the ambitious goal of promoting the use of Nature-Based Solutions and zero-emission technologies, serving as a replicable model for the sustainable management of coastal areas in the Mediterranean basin.

1.2 Framework within the LIFE terrAmare project

This procedure constitutes a deliverable of WP1, “Project management, monitoring of the project progress and reporting”, and is directly linked to Task 1.3 dedicated to Green Public Procurement. It applies to all activities carried out by the consortium over the 72-month duration of the project, from 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2031, with the objective of contributing to the overall reduction of environmental impacts.

Coordination is entrusted to D.R.E.AM. Italia, which is responsible for supervising the correct implementation of the procedure by all partners and ensuring compliance with contractual obligations. Given that the project operates within highly fragile ecosystems, such as dune habitats and *Posidonia oceanica* seagrass meadows, all purchases of materials for habitat restoration, as well as related logistical services, must be carefully assessed to prevent any form of pollution or unintended disturbance to the target sites and their surrounding natural context.

The scope of application of this procedure extends geographically to the twelve Natura 2000 sites located in Italy and Greece and covers all phases of the procurement process, from the definition of technical specifications in tender documents to the verification of compliance of delivered goods and services. It ensures that all declared expenditures, as eligible costs, comply with the principles of sound financial management and sustainability established by the granting authority CINEA and the European Commission.

The entities required to comply with this procedure include all members of the partnership that are signatories to the Grant Agreement, as well as their affiliated entities. While primary responsibility lies with the coordinating beneficiary, it is equally shared among academic partners, such as the University of Tuscia (UNITUS), the University of Milan (UMIL), the University of Crete (UOC) and the Institute of Mediterranean and Forest Ecosystems (ELGO-DIMITRA); research and environmental protection organisations, including

Legambiente (LEGAMB), the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), the Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH), and the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature (HSPN); as well as site management and protection authorities, such as the Carabinieri Command for Forest, Environmental and Agri-food Units (CUFAA), the Regional Marine Parks Authority of Calabria (EPMRC), Calabria Verde (CALAVERD), and the Torre Guaceto Management Consortium (TG). Each beneficiary is fully responsible for applying Green Procurement criteria within its own procurement procedures, including those implemented by associated partners and any other entities involved.

1.3 Principles of Green Public Procurement

The strategy is based on the core principles of Green Public Procurement promoted by the European Commission, adapted to the specific context of nature conservation actions. The key principle is the life-cycle approach, which shifts the focus from the purchase price alone to the assessment of impacts related to production, transport, and end-of-life disposal.

The strategy also promotes energy efficiency and the responsible use of resources, favouring suppliers that provide certified sustainability guarantees. In addition, the procedure supports the elimination of hazardous substances and the reduction of the carbon footprint, encouraging the use of short supply chains and the replacement of physical meetings with virtual sessions to reduce transport-related emissions.

But what do we mean by “green” or “sustainable”? A simple yet effective framework to reduce the environmental impact of everyday actions is represented by the “5 Rs”:

Refuse: avoiding unnecessary products, especially single-use or high-impact items;

Reduce: minimising resource consumption and waste generation by optimising use;

Reuse: extending the life of products and materials by using them multiple times;

Recycle: properly separating waste to enable its transformation into new raw materials;

Rot: recovering organic waste through composting or natural degradation processes.

These practical principles help translate Green Public Procurement into concrete actions, making each decision more conscious and environmentally responsible.

1.4 Types of purchases covered

The types of purchases covered by this procedure include all categories of eligible costs defined in the Grant Agreement, ranging from technical supplies to professional services. To facilitate the application of sustainability criteria, a dedicated section, “CHAPTER 3: GREEN PROCUREMENT CRITERIA BY PURCHASE CATEGORY”, has been developed to provide operational guidance for each type of procurement.

This chapter outlines the environmental criteria to be applied to the acquisition of specific equipment and infrastructure, such as marine monitoring systems and laser scanning technologies, as well as to materials required for dune restoration actions, including wooden poles and Cocoon systems. The procedure also covers expenditures related to travel and mobility, the organisation of events, and the production of communication and dissemination materials, such as brochures and information panels.

Furthermore, all subcontracting agreements and the procurement of external services related to the implementation of the “ecological beach” model must comply with green procurement criteria, ensuring that the entire supply chain is aligned with European environmental standards.

CHAPTER 2: REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND REFERENCES

The project operates within a dynamic regulatory context, in which Green Public Procurement has evolved from a voluntary instrument into a strategic pillar for the implementation of climate policies. Compliance with these frameworks ensures that the consortium acts as a catalyst for the market of environmentally sustainable goods and services, in line with the standards required by the CINEA Executive Agency and the European Commission.

2.1 European policies on Green Public Procurement

Current European Union policies are strategically centred on the European Green Deal and the “Fit for 55” legislative package, which identify public procurement as a key financial lever for achieving the EU’s climate objectives. These frameworks aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, as a step towards the goal of climate neutrality by 2050.

In this context, Green Public Procurement (GPP) operates in direct synergy with the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, which calls for the restoration of degraded ecosystems and the protection of carbon-rich habitats—objectives that are fully aligned with the core actions of the LIFE terrAmare project.

An additional key pillar is the Circular Economy Action Plan, which promotes the transition from a linear to a circular model of resource management. This approach aims to retain the value of products within the economy for as long as possible, minimising waste generation through the adoption of consumption models based on reuse, recycling, and innovative product-service systems.

2.1.1 Towards mandatory requirements: the ESPR Regulation

A major regulatory development is represented by the recent Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products (ESPR). This regulation marks a fundamental paradigm shift, moving Green Public Procurement from a largely voluntary approach to a more binding framework through the introduction of mandatory minimum sustainability requirements for almost all categories of physical goods placed on the single market.

Specifically, Article 65 of the ESPR empowers the European Commission to define minimum environmental criteria through delegated acts, while existing guidance recommends assigning environmental criteria a weighting of between 15% and 30% in the award phase, thereby promoting the selection of products with the best environmental performance.

In line with this regulatory evolution, LIFE terrAmare integrates the use of the Digital Product Passport (DPP) as a key tool to ensure supply chain transparency and the traceability of sustainability performance throughout the entire product life cycle.

2.1.2 European public procurement legislation

The legal framework governing procurement within the consortium is established by Directives 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU, which provide the basis for integrating robust environmental clauses at all stages of the procurement process, from the definition of technical specifications based on environmental performance to selection criteria and contract execution conditions.

For project partners acting as contracting authorities or bodies governed by public law, compliance with these directives constitutes a binding legal obligation, ensuring that suppliers adhere to international environmental standards. This responsibility is further reinforced by Regulation (EU) 2024/2509 (Financial Regulation), explicitly referenced in the Grant Agreement, which establishes that the principle of “sound financial management” must be intrinsically linked to the environmental efficiency of expenditures.

This methodological approach requires the adoption of Life-Cycle Costing (LCC), enabling the reduction of environmental impacts by considering not only the acquisition cost, but also operational costs related to resource consumption and end-of-life management, thereby ensuring cost eligibility in financial audits.

Furthermore, in both the Italian and Greek contexts, the procedure systematically promotes the use of local and sustainable supply chains to reduce transport-related emissions, as well as the adoption of certified materials and Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), ensuring full legal compliance and the eligibility of declared costs for the management of coastal habitats.

2.2 European Commission guidelines and tools

For the practical implementation of the procedure, and to ensure operational effectiveness as well as the accuracy of calculations required for KPI reporting, the LIFE terrAmare consortium adopts and promotes the use of official technical tools provided by the European Commission.

Methodological documentation

- [“Buying Green!” Handbook](#): the main reference guide for Green Public Procurement, providing practical guidance on how to integrate environmental requirements at each stage of the procurement process.
- [Public Procurement for a Circular Economy](#): guidance document supporting the transition towards a circular economy model through public procurement practices.

Calculation and verification tools:

- [Life Cycle Costing \(LCC\) calculators](#): the project promotes the use of European Commission toolkits to assess the total cost of technical monitoring equipment, including energy consumption and end-of-life costs.
- [LCC Calculator for Vehicle Procurement](#): a specific tool to monetise environmental impacts (CO₂, NO_x, and particulate emissions) and calculate vehicle operating costs.
- [Energy Efficient Products Portal](#): a European platform providing access to products compliant with Ecodesign and Energy Labelling requirements.

Databases and best practices

- [EU GPP Criteria](#): application of specific criteria for “Design, construction and management of public spaces” and for “Electrical and electronic equipment in the healthcare/scientific sector” (relevant for equipment used by university and research partners).
- [GPP Good Practice Library](#): a collection of case studies and best practices on green and sustainable procurement implemented across Europe, supporting the development of technical specifications.

CHAPTER 3: GREEN PROCUREMENT CRITERIA BY PURCHASE CATEGORY

3.1 IT and office equipment

The procurement of IT hardware, such as computers, monitors, and other technological equipment, must be guided by the principles of energy efficiency, extension of product lifespan, and minimisation of electronic waste. In this context, reference should be made to the criteria established by the Energy Labelling Framework Regulation (ELFR), which governs the European energy labelling system, as well as to Ecodesign legislation and the principles introduced by the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), which promotes products designed to be more durable, repairable, upgradable, and recyclable.

Before proceeding with the purchase of new equipment, a careful assessment should be made of the actual need to replace existing devices. In many cases, upgrading hardware components—such as increasing RAM or replacing hard drives with SSD units—can significantly improve performance and extend the operational life of devices, thereby reducing the environmental impact associated with the production of new equipment.

Where procurement is necessary, preference should be given to refurbished or remanufactured devices. This choice helps to avoid the extraction of new raw materials, reduce electronic waste (e-waste), and lower the environmental footprint associated with the production of new equipment, while still ensuring adequate performance for operational needs and often including warranty coverage.

In the case of purchasing new devices, these should belong to the highest energy efficiency classes available under the EU energy labelling system and should feature characteristics that enhance repairability, modularity, and durability. Preference should be given to products designed with easily replaceable components that are not permanently soldered, thus facilitating maintenance and upgrades over time. The presence of environmental and energy certifications, such as Energy Star or TCO Certified, provides appropriate evidence of compliance with sustainability requirements, as these certifications ensure high energy efficiency standards, design criteria supporting repairability, and greater control over the use of sustainable materials throughout the supply chain.

It is also recommended to prioritise suppliers that guarantee the availability of spare parts for an adequate period, offer maintenance and repair services, and implement take-back schemes, thereby ensuring proper recovery of equipment at the end of its life cycle. The presence of certified environmental management systems, such as EMAS or ISO 14001, represents an additional criterion for assessing the supplier’s technical capacity to manage the environmental impact of its production processes.

The environmental impact of IT equipment can be further reduced through efficient energy management during the use phase. Activating power-saving modes, such as sleep or hibernation when devices are not in

use, fully switching off monitors and peripherals at the end of the working day, and reducing screen brightness all contribute to lowering electricity consumption and improving overall energy efficiency.

An additional area for improvement concerns so-called Green Software, which aims to reduce the energy consumption of applications and digital infrastructures. In this regard, more efficient data management should be promoted by avoiding the accumulation of unnecessary files, obsolete emails, or redundant archives, and by reducing the volume of data stored in cloud services, whose operation requires significant energy consumption in data centres. It is also advisable to prioritise efficient and regularly updated software, benefiting from performance and energy optimisations, and, where possible, to use cloud services and digital infrastructures that adopt energy sustainability criteria or are powered by renewable energy sources.

Finally, the disposal of IT equipment must be carried out exclusively through dedicated WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) collection systems, in order to ensure proper material recovery and prevent environmental impacts resulting from improper disposal. Responsible end-of-life management allows for the recovery of rare metals and other valuable resources, contributing to the transition towards a circular economy.

Relevant budget items falling under this category:

Beneficiary	Budget item	Application of GPP criteria
CSIC	1.500 € - <i>Purchase of computer equipment</i>	Preference for high energy-efficiency devices (top energy classes, Energy Star or equivalent certifications) Assessment of the possibility to purchase refurbished devices Selection of products designed for durability and easy repair Choice of suppliers that ensure technical support and sustainable end-of-life management Proper management of electronic waste through WEEE collection systems
HSPN	4.000 € - <i>Purchase of 2 portable computers and spare parts</i>	
ELGO-DIMITRA	4.000 € - <i>Purchase of 2 portable computers and spare parts</i>	
UOC	4.000 € - <i>Purchase of 2 portable computers and spare parts</i>	

3.2 Consumables and printing materials (WP6)

For consumables used in office activities and for the production of informational and communication materials, procurement procedures are oriented towards solutions that contribute to reducing the consumption of natural resources, limiting waste generation, and promoting circular economy models throughout the entire product life cycle.

In particular, for paper and printing media, the use of 100% post-consumer recycled paper is encouraged, as it significantly reduces the demand for virgin fibres and the environmental impact associated with forest management and production processes. Where this is not compatible with specific technical requirements, the use of paper sourced from sustainably managed forests and certified by FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) or PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) is recommended. Where possible, the use of alternative media derived from renewable materials or agricultural residues, such as plant fibres or bamboo, is also considered positively, in order to reduce pressure on forest resources.

In the selection of paper products, attention is also given to product design aspects, favouring lower grammage where compatible with the intended use, as well as natural finishes that avoid plastic coatings or synthetic treatments that hinder recyclability. Environmental compliance of products may be verified through recognised ecolabels, such as the EU Ecolabel or equivalent schemes (e.g. Blue Angel), which ensure high standards throughout the product life cycle.

Regarding printing processes, preference is given to technologies and practices that reduce the use of chemicals and energy consumption, including the use of eco-friendly inks based on water or vegetable sources. Digital printing and print-on-demand solutions are encouraged, where appropriate, in order to minimise waste. For professional printing services, low-impact technological solutions are positively considered.

For office supplies and consumables, the selection of products made from recycled materials or sourced from sustainable supply chains is encouraged, as well as the use of durable and refillable items to reduce waste generation. Similarly, for toner and cartridges, preference is given to remanufactured or refillable solutions, accompanied by appropriate collection and recovery systems at end of life.

The same principles apply to materials used for communication and dissemination activities, including information panels, brochures, and publications, promoting the use of eco-friendly substrates and low-impact inks. In the case of alternative materials, such as plastic or composite supports, preference is given to recycled or recyclable options, avoiding substances potentially harmful to the environment.

For promotional gadgets, preference is given to useful, durable products designed for long-term use, preferably made from natural or recycled materials and sourced from responsible supply chains.

Sustainable material management is further supported through the adoption of good practices in waste separation and recycling, encouraging the use of mono-materials and proper waste sorting. Packaging is also selected with the aim of reducing environmental impact, favouring recycled, recyclable, or biodegradable solutions and limiting the use of single-use plastics.

Finally, attention is given to the selection of local or regional suppliers, in order to reduce transport-related emissions and promote more sustainable and transparent supply chains, while encouraging compliance with environmental and social standards throughout the entire supply chain.

3.3 Organisation of events and meetings

The organisation of meetings, workshops, and events is designed to systematically integrate environmental and social sustainability criteria throughout all stages of planning and implementation, with the aim of reducing the ecological impact of activities and promoting responsible behaviour among suppliers and participants.

In particular, catering services are designed to prioritise organic, seasonal, and locally sourced (short supply chain) products, thereby contributing to the reduction of transport-related emissions and supporting local economies. Menu planning favours low-impact options, including a reduced consumption of meat and fish, and, where possible, incorporates ingredients from organic farming and fair-trade supply chains.

For beverage management, the use of single-use plastic bottles is discouraged, favouring reusable solutions such as pitchers, dispensers, or reusable bottles, with particular attention to the use of local water resources. Similarly, the use of reusable tableware (ceramic, glass, or metal) is encouraged, or alternatively certified compostable options, as well as reusable service materials (e.g. fabric), in order to minimise overall waste generation.

Particular attention is given to the prevention of food waste, through careful planning of participant numbers and, where possible, the implementation of surplus recovery and donation systems in collaboration with local organisations, in compliance with applicable regulations.

The selection of event venues prioritises facilities that adopt sustainable management practices, preferably holding environmental certifications or environmental management systems, and that are easily accessible by public or collective transport, thus contributing to the reduction of mobility-related emissions. Preference is also given to venues implementing energy efficiency measures and/or using renewable energy sources. During events, proper waste management is ensured through clear and accessible waste separation systems.

Sustainability is further supported through responsible communication practices, promoting the use of digital tools for invitations, programmes, and informational materials (e.g. online platforms or QR codes), thereby minimising paper use. At the same time, active engagement of suppliers, partners, and participants is encouraged with regard to the sustainability objectives of the initiative, fostering more conscious behaviours.

In the case of promotional materials or gadgets, preference is given to useful, durable products made from natural, recycled, or easily recyclable materials, avoiding single-use or low-quality items. Finally, supplier selection procedures take into account the adoption of advanced environmental management practices, such as waste reduction approaches or “zero waste” models, recognising these as qualifying criteria.

3.4 Project travel and mobility

Project mobility is strongly oriented towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through an integrated approach that jointly considers travel planning, transport modes, accommodation choices, and the overall management of mobility. Within this framework, a “virtual first” approach is promoted, encouraging careful assessment of the actual need for physical travel and prioritising, where possible, the use of videoconferencing and digital tools. Travel planning is organised to combine multiple meetings within a single trip whenever feasible, thereby reducing the overall number of journeys.

When travel is necessary, preference is given to lower-impact transport modes, such as rail—particularly high-speed trains—over air travel, due to the significantly lower emissions per passenger. Where air travel cannot be avoided, direct flights are preferred in order to minimise energy consumption associated with take-off and landing phases. For local mobility, shared transport solutions such as car pooling, car sharing, and public transport are encouraged. Where vehicle rental is required, preference is given to lower-impact options, such as hybrid or electric vehicles, also in line with Life Cycle Cost (LCC) approaches.

Accommodation selection is also guided by environmental sustainability considerations, favouring establishments that adopt responsible resource management practices and hold recognised certifications (such as CETS, LEED, Green Key, or EMAS). Preference is also given to facilities that reduce the use of single-use plastics, promote local products, and encourage sustainable behaviours among guests, such as waste separation and energy saving.

For unavoidable travel, the adoption of emission offsetting measures is positively considered, through certified programmes for reforestation or renewable energy production. In parallel, the development of tools for monitoring and reporting CO₂ emissions associated with travel is encouraged, in order to identify opportunities for improvement over time. Even small operational measures, such as reducing luggage weight, are recognised as contributing to more sustainable mobility.

Overall, this approach reflects a concrete commitment to minimising the environmental impact of project-related mobility, while maintaining the effectiveness of activities and the quality of interactions among partners and stakeholders.

3.5 Materials and supplies for environmental interventions and ecosystem restoration (WP3|WP4)

For dune restoration and priority habitat recovery actions, the procurement of materials is strongly oriented towards environmental sustainability and traceability criteria, with the aim of ensuring full consistency between operational activities and the ecological objectives of the project. In this context, the use of wooden poles and other timber or plant-based materials is promoted, accompanied—where available—by certifications attesting the legal and sustainable origin of the raw materials, thereby supporting compliance with forestry regulations and the responsible management of natural resources. Where such certifications are not available, preference is given to local suppliers or those located near the intervention areas, in order to reduce transport-related impacts and promote more sustainable supply chains.

In line with the project approach, the use of Nature-Based Solutions is encouraged, favouring biodegradable or recycled materials, such as arundo, vegetative fascines, or low-impact geotextiles, while avoiding substances that may alter biochemical balances and soil quality within Natura 2000 sites. Suppliers are

selected based on their experience in environmental interventions in protected areas and their ability to operate while minimising disturbance to wildlife, erosion processes, and pollution risks.

The use of certified and low-impact materials plays a particularly important role in dune stabilisation activities along Italian and Greek coasts, including the installation of poles and fascines, the planting of native species, and the protection of breeding areas. Interventions under WP3 are designed to be carried out primarily using manual techniques, avoiding the use of heavy machinery in order to preserve the substrate and existing vegetation structures; consequently, supplies are selected to ensure compatibility with these operational methods. The use of innovative solutions, such as the Cocoon system, biodegradable and made from recycled materials, is also encouraged to improve water-use efficiency and enhance plant resilience.

The planning of procurement and material use takes into account the operational needs of the worksites, site accessibility constraints, and the seasonality of activities, promoting close coordination with stabilisation, planting, and conservation actions foreseen under WP3 and WP4. This integrated approach contributes to reducing overall environmental impact and supports the successful implementation of ecosystem restoration interventions.

The following budget items, as outlined in the project budget, fall within this category and represent priority areas for the application of Green Procurement criteria:

Relevant budget items falling under this category:

Beneficiary	Budget item	Application of GPP criteria
CUFAA	WP03: €50,000 - <i>Purchase of materials and tools for three work sites, including self-tapping screws, wire, geotextile fabric, and essential equipment such as cordless drill, hammer, level, hand drill, cordless grinder, and cordless chainsaw</i>	<p>Preferential use of biodegradable or natural geotextiles, as an alternative to conventional synthetic materials</p> <p>Durability and repairability of equipment: selection of tools (e.g. drills, grinders, chainsaws) oriented towards durable, repairable products with available spare parts, in order to extend their life cycle and reduce waste generation</p>
	WP03: €50,000 - <i>Purchase and disposal of chemical products for the treatment of invasive alien species. It includes approximately 1,000 liters of herbicide (at an average cost of €10/liter) and 500 liters of adjuvants and complementary products (at around €6/liter), plus an</i>	<p>Preference for local suppliers, in order to reduce transport-related emissions and support local economies</p>



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	<i>estimated €1,000 for disposal of residues</i>	<p>Limitation of the use of chemical products for the control of invasive alien species to cases where no effective mechanical or natural alternatives are available; in such cases, lower-impact products will be prioritised and applied according to controlled and targeted use principles</p> <p>Controlled disposal of residues to prevent environmental contamination</p>
ELGO-DIMITRA	WP3: 10.000 € - <i>Refrigerators for the seed bank</i>	<p>Energy-efficient equipment, preferably belonging to the highest energy classes available under EU regulations, in order to reduce electricity consumption during operation</p> <p>Preference for models using low climate-impact refrigerants (low GWP) and energy-saving technologies</p> <p>Selection of products designed for intensive use, with a long lifespan and availability of technical support and spare parts</p>
HSPN	WP3: 20.000 € - <i>Fencing of 1 km for reproduction centers of Juniperus sp. in Gavdos Island (20 € per meter)</i>	<p>Use of durable and long-lasting materials</p> <p>Selection of local suppliers</p> <p>Preference for natural or recycled materials</p> <p>Low-impact design on soil and wildlife</p>

<p>CALAVERD</p>	<p>WP3: 80.000 € - <i>Purchase of materials and equipment for five work sites, including self-tapping screws, wire, geotextile fabric, and essential tools (cordless drill, hammer, level, hand drill, grinder, cordless chainsaw)</i></p>	<p>Application of the same criteria adopted for CUFAA</p> <p>Optimisation of quantities to reduce waste</p> <p>Selection of local suppliers for bulky materials (e.g. geotextiles)</p>
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3.6 Volunteer management

Volunteer management must reflect the environmental and social commitment of the project, integrating sustainability criteria into all aspects of the training and operational experience.

Particular attention is given to the selection of accommodation located in strategic positions, close to activity sites, in order to reduce the need for private transport, optimise mobility, and limit related emissions. Facilities are also expected to implement waste separation practices, reduce the use of single-use materials, and adopt behaviours consistent with circular economy principles.

Volunteer training includes specific modules on low-impact environmental behaviour, proper waste management during field activities, and energy and water-saving practices. During internships or activities within host organisations, the digitalisation of documentation, reporting, and training materials is encouraged, thereby reducing paper consumption. At the same time, the use of eco-friendly or reusable stationery supports a culture of reuse.

Volunteers are guided to actively contribute to the sustainability objectives of the hosting organisation, for example through the analysis of resource consumption, the efficient management of resources, and the reduction of waste.

CHAPTER 4: MONITORING AND REPORTING

The monitoring of the effectiveness of the Green Public Procurement (GPP) procedure is based on a set of key indicators, including the percentage of tenders, requests for quotations, and purchases that incorporate minimum and/or award environmental criteria. These indicators directly contribute to the LIFE Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the project.

The collection of evidence related to the implementation of GPP is structured as a systematic and shared process involving all beneficiaries, in order to ensure transparency, traceability, and verifiability of the procedures adopted.

For the purchases already identified in Chapter 3, the following operational modalities are envisaged:

1. Integration of environmental criteria into procurement documentation

The procurement decision must explicitly include evidence of compliance with the environmental criteria defined in the GPP, with specific reference to the materials and services identified in Chapter 3.

Example: purchase of IT equipment:

“The acquisition will follow institutional procurement procedures committed to selecting environmentally certified products (e.g. Energy Star, EPEAT), as well as a preference for durable and upgradeable equipment. Suppliers are required to provide technical support, availability of spare parts, and appropriate end-of-life management, including compliance with WEEE regulations.”

2. Collection and archiving of technical and certification evidence

During the reporting phase, the following supporting documentation must be collected and archived to demonstrate compliance with GPP requirements:

- technical specifications included in tender documents;
- product datasheets indicating the presence of environmental labels (e.g. EU Ecolabel) or energy efficiency classes;
- environmental certifications of awarded suppliers, such as EMAS or ISO 14001.

Example: project travel and mobility: in the case of selecting accommodation certified under CETS, documentary evidence (e.g. screenshot or official certificate) must be provided to demonstrate compliance.

The reporting of Green Procurement results constitutes an integral part of the project’s official reporting to the granting authority, CINEA. Progress in the implementation of GPP will be described in the Progress Reports and in the Mid-term and Final Reports, through an analysis of performance indicators and their contribution to project objectives.

In particular, reporting will highlight:

- the level of integration of environmental criteria in procurement processes;
- the contribution of GPP to achieving the project’s environmental objectives;
- any challenges encountered and the solutions adopted to overcome market barriers.

CONCLUSIONS

This Green Procurement procedure represents far more than a bureaucratic requirement; it constitutes the formal commitment of the LIFE terrAmare consortium to ensure coherence between the conservation objectives of the target habitats and its internal management practices. The systematic adoption of the criteria defined in this manual ensures that every stage of procurement becomes a concrete action supporting the ecological transition, transforming the partnership’s purchasing power into a driver of innovation and sustainability within the local market. Through the integration of rigorous technical requirements, the use of Nature-Based Solutions, and the application of Life Cycle Costing approaches, the project ensures a tangible reduction of environmental impacts and an optimal use of the financial resources provided by the European Union.

The effectiveness of this strategy will depend on the active participation of all partners and the continuous supervision of the coordinating beneficiary, ensuring that the reporting of results properly feeds into the



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LIFE Programme's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), particularly with regard to climate neutrality and the circular economy. Ultimately, LIFE terrAmare aims to serve as a reference model in the Mediterranean area, demonstrating that scientific excellence in ecosystem restoration must be intrinsically linked to green, transparent, and responsible administrative governance.

ANNEX 1: MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

This annex provides an overview of labels and certifications recognised by the European Commission as valid means of proof for demonstrating the sustainability of products and services. In accordance with Article 43 of Directive 2014/24/EU, partners must also accept equivalent evidence where the economic operator does not have access to a specific certification for reasons beyond its control.

Product Certifications (Ecolabels)

EU Ecolabel



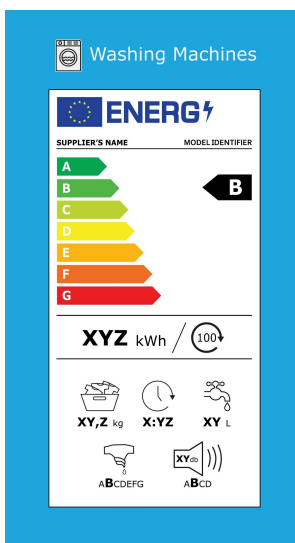
It is the European Union's official environmental excellence label, awarded to products and services that meet high environmental standards throughout their life cycle. It covers more than 30 product categories, including detergents (relevant for volunteer accommodation management), paper, and textile products.

Forest Certifications (FSC and PEFC)



These are essential for the procurement of wood-based materials used in dune restoration or for paper supply. They ensure that timber originates from responsibly managed forests, helping to combat deforestation.

Energy Star and Energy Labelling (ELFR)



These are used for IT and office equipment (e.g. monitors, PCs, printers). They identify devices with the lowest energy consumption during operation. Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 (Energy Labelling Framework Regulation – ELFR) supports the selection of sustainable products through clear energy efficiency classes.

Process Certifications (Management Systems)

EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme)

A voluntary instrument developed by the European Commission for organisations wishing to evaluate and improve their environmental performance. In procurement procedures, it can be considered strong evidence of a supplier's environmental standards.

ISO 14001

An international standard for environmental management systems. Although less stringent than EMAS in terms of public transparency, it is widely accepted as proof of a company's technical capacity to manage its environmental impacts.

Common National and Private Labels

Blauer Engel (Germania): In Europe, this certification is referenced within Green Public Procurement (GPP) Minimum Environmental Criteria (CAM) for the procurement of copying and graphic paper, as well as for cleaning and sanitation services and related products.

Nordic Swan (Paesi Scandinavi): Commonly used for cleaning services and chemical products.

TCO Certified: Specific to sustainability and social responsibility in the IT sector.

Organic Certifications (EU Organic Bio-Logo): Required for catering and food supplies provided in canteens or during project meetings, ensuring compliance with organic production standards.

