



Priority sector:
Climate Change and Renewable Energy

EEA GRANTS 2009-14

Environmental and Climate Change-related Research and Technology

The EEA Financial Mechanism shall contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area, and to strengthening the bilateral relations between the EEA EFTA States – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – and the Beneficiary States. The programme area shall contribute to these two overall objectives.

Objective

Strengthened knowledge base on the environment and climate change and increased application of environmental technology

Expected outcomes

- Increased national and international knowledge base of the EEA programme areas on environment and climate change
- Increased development and application of technology that benefits the environment

Relevance of support

The European Commission is preparing a strategy for a greener, more competitive European economy. Achieving an eco-efficient economy is a key objective of a post-Lisbon strategy (EU 2020).

A sustainable and environmentally friendly Europe requires extensive environmental research and development. Research is a key area for promoting the long-term improvement of environmental protection in Europe.

The environment is a field where collaborative research traditionally has proven to be highly fruitful. The complexity of the problems calls for multidisciplinary approaches. Cooperation between disciplines such as biology, chemistry and social sciences is essential for the understanding and solving of environmental problems. Furthermore, the challenges posed by the increasing pressures on the environment require a coordinated approach at the European and international level.

In respect of the development and application of environmental technologies, it is important to support actions improving innovation processes and moving inventions from research and laboratories and into the market. Strengthening of national infrastructures to promote eco-innovation is a condition for ensuring the optimal use of research results and creating an eco-efficient economy.

Public procurement accounts for around 16% of the EU's GDP. As such it represents a potentially powerful economic driver to further the uptake of environmental technologies. Green Public Procurement (GPP) is therefore one important instrument which demands and increases environmental awareness and knowledge in the public and private sector. The EU has encouraged all Member States to draw up a National Action Plan for GPP, and has also proposed a political target of 50% GPP (priority product and service groups) to be reached by the Member States by 2010. In 2010, the European Commission initiated discussions with Member States on how to monitor progress against the target in an effective fashion.

Suggested activities

- National and international multidisciplinary research on environmental protection and climate change
- Research activities related to the EEA Grants programme areas (e.g. marine and inland water management, biodiversity, environmental monitoring and control, reduction of hazardous substances and climate change adaptation)
- Actions to strengthen national capacity to promote eco-innovations
- National and local action plans to increase the level of Green Public Procurement
- Research activities on the effects of climate change and mitigation options

Programme area specificities

- Suitable for involving small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Reduce economic and social disparities
Strengthen bilateral relations