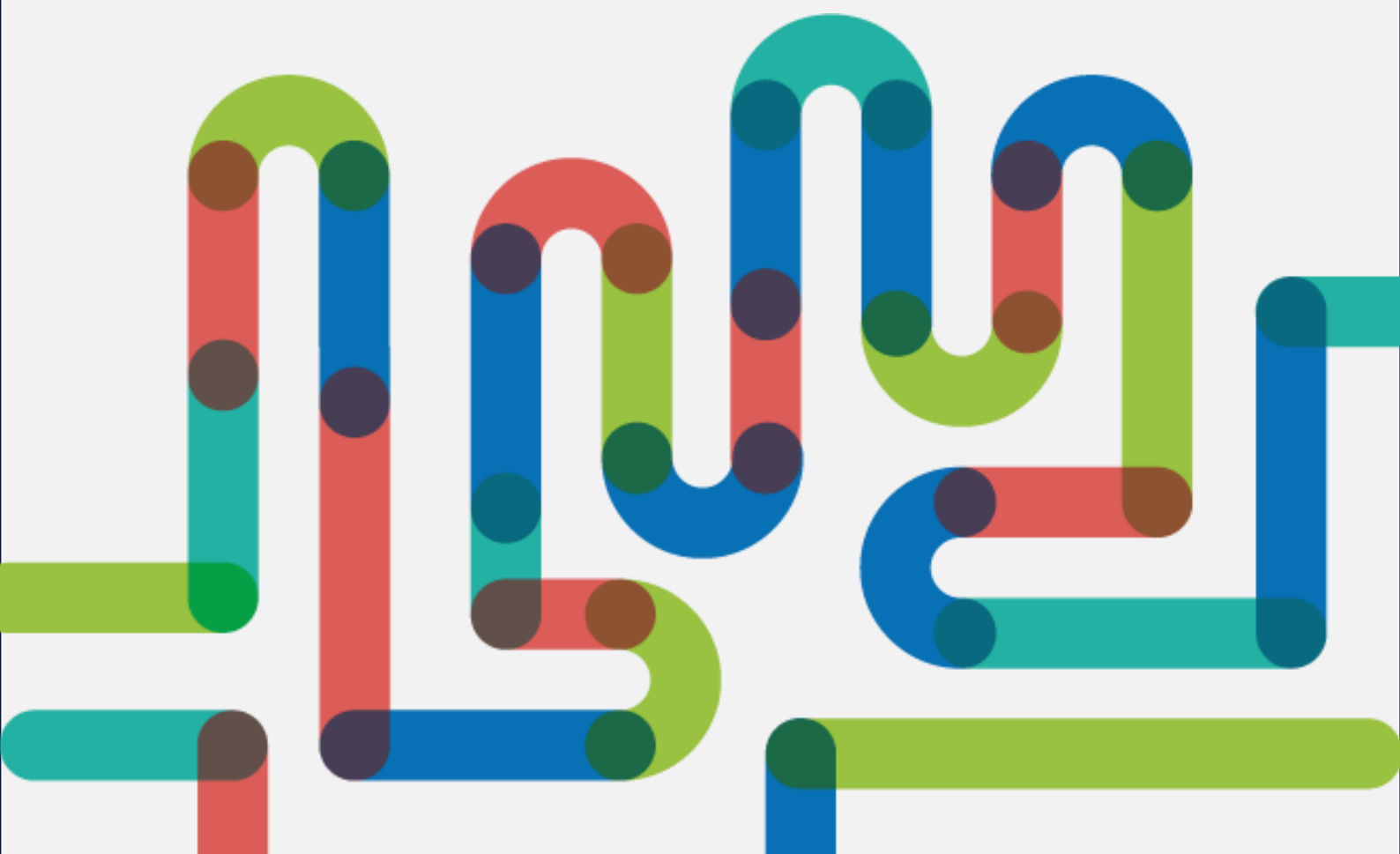


INTERREG VI-A ITALIA-SLOVENIA 2021-2027

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING PLAN



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Introduction

This Environmental Monitoring Plan for the implementation of the INTERREG VI A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Cooperation Programme (hereinafter referred to as the "Programme") is outlined according to Chapter 8 of the Environmental Report (hereinafter, ER) of the Programme and provides for:

- the definition and monitoring of **environmental indicators** (designed to measure the progress of the Programme impact and ensure its consistency with the SEA assessments)
- the **monitoring team** to support the Managing Authority,
- the **reporting time schedule**
- the **methods of collecting** and the **systemization of the information** functional to the monitoring process.

The purpose of this document is to illustrate the environmental monitoring activities to show the state of the art of recommendations regarding sustainable development and environmental indicators expressed during the Strategic Environmental Assessment (hereinafter, SEA) procedure and defined in the ER.

This Environmental Monitoring Plan for the implementation of the INTERREG VI A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Cooperation Programme is presented for acknowledgement to the first meeting of the Monitoring Committee.

It will be valid for the upcoming public procedures to be launched under the Programme until eventual updates on indications by the relevant Environmental Authorities.

1. Methodology

The monitoring of the environmental indicators will take into account the way in which Recommendations envisaged by SEA and ER are considered:

- *in the formulation of calls for proposals/letters of Invitation and Application Packages;*
- *in the assessment and selection of project proposals*
- *during project implementation.*

Environmental monitoring shall serve to monitor the degree of achievement of the sustainability objectives identified in the ER and in the Environmental Statement (hereinafter, ES).

2. The Interreg VI-A Italy-Slovenia 2021-2027 Programme

The Programme in the framework of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The purpose of such Cross-Border programmes is to support Member States to implement joint projects, address joint challenges and overcome border obstacles.

The Programme area extends over a total surface of 19,841 km² and has a total population of approximately 3 million inhabitants. It covers 5 Italian NUTS 3 regions (Venice, Udine, Pordenone, Gorizia and Trieste) and 5 Slovenian NUTS 3 regions (Primorsko-notranjska, Osrednjeslovenska, Gorenjska, Obalno-kraška and Goriška).

The Programme document (hereinafter, IP) highlights six main areas where to intervene to improve the living conditions of all agents and the population of the Programme area. They are: 1. Research and Innovation; 2. Energy, Climate change and Sustainable Development; 3. Labour Market, Human Capital and Linguistic Minorities, Healthcare; 4. Connectivity and Transports; 5. Natural and Cultural heritage and Tourism; 6. Governance.

Priorities (POs) and Specific Objectives (SOs) are described in the next table, along with funding.

Table 1 - Priorities (POs) and Specific Objectives (SOs) of the Programme.

Priorities	Specific Objectives	Financial endowment
PO 1 - A more competitive and smarter Europe	SO 1.1 - Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies	€ 6.439.065,00 (9,7%)
PO 2 - A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe	SO 2.4 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	€ 9.342.721,00 (14,1%)
	SO 2.6 - Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	€ 5.294.208,00 (8,0%)
	SO 2.7 - Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution (also includes the POSEIDONE strategic project)	€ 10.171.344,00 (15,4%)
PO 4 - A more social and inclusive Europe	SO 4.6 - Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation (also includes the ADRIOCYCLETOUT strategic project and another one for the joint management and sustainable development of the Classical Karst Area)	€ 29.853.250,00 (45,0%)
ISO 1 – Better Cooperation Governance	ISO 1 (b) - Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions	€ 3.659.845,00 (5,5%)
	ISO 1 (c) - Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions	€ 1.500.000,00 (2,3%)
<i>Total</i>		€ 66.260.433,00 (100,0%)

The Programme will coordinate with EUSALP and EUSAIR macro-regional strategies to create synergies with regular projects and their flagship projects. Furthermore, it shows clear

complementarity and potentials with other programmes and objectives such as the European Green Deal, Alpine space, Adrion, Italy-Austria, Slovenia-Croatia, etc.

The Programme will also be committed to ensuring the respect of the horizontal principles outlined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union including gender equality, non-discrimination, accessibility and sustainable development throughout preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of projects taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the "Do No Significant Harm" (hereinafter, DNSH) principle.

With respect to internal coherence, the IP has been designed paying attention to compatibility with other planning documents of Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia regions and of Republic of Slovenia: none of the objectives proposed in the IP are in contrast with current legislation and plans of the different regions of the Programme area.

3. Recommendations envisaged by Environmental Statement (ES) and Environmental Report (ER)

The SEA aims to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations and ensure a high level of environmental protection in the preparation and adoption of the Programme in line with prescriptions of the Directive 2001/42/EC ("SEA Directive").

The SEA procedure was performed in an interactive way by the experts contracted by the Programme the Programme Managing Authority /the Programming Task Force / the Environmental Authorities of the Programme area. This SEA is based on the Programme Strategy as outlined in the IP.

Impacts were assessed on the basis of changes in impact indicators in regard to: the state of the environment and the importance of these changes, the level at which environmental protection objectives were taken into account during the IP preparation and other evaluation criteria.

The IP is clearly oriented towards sustainable development and search for green solutions by design. Since all projects and investments need to be implemented in line with national legislation and standards, no potentially significant adverse impact is foreseen even for the realistic worst/case scenario during programme implementation. The crossborder effects are exclusively positive.

3.1. Recommendations

No significant negative impacts have been identified in the SEA for any of seven SOs of the Programme, and only non-significant negative impacts have been identified for two out of seven SOs. Furthermore, the whole IP is placing a strong emphasis on improving the environmental situation and addressing key environmental and sustainability concerns.

Also, during the SEA a substantial compliance of the IP to the DNSH principle assessment was found: In just two out of seven SOs, namely SO 2.4 and SO 4.6, the compliance degree is lower than 100%, ranging from 80% for biodiversity to 90% for water.

Some non-significant negative impacts mitigation measures and recommendations for further enhancement of identified positive impacts were integrated into the IP (chapter 1.5.). Additional recommendations useful to also re-establish a 100% compliance to DNSH principle are:

Table 2 - Recommendations

Proposed mitigation measures	Targeted SO / Environmental aspects
The IP should encourage all applicants applying to SO 2.4 and 4.6 to use “ <i>environmental sustainability by design</i> ” approach through the project selection process. Applicants should explain whether and how their proposed actions take into the consideration potential increase of tourist flows, improvement of the sustainability of their tourism offer and/or contribute to reduction of carbon footprint of their tourism products/services (e.g. new tourism products/services based on sustainable mobility solutions or public transport, systemic efforts to reduce or optimize tourism flows, etc.), as well as effective and sustainable use of natural re-sources or contribute to regeneration of the environment and ecosystem services – for example in the dedicated section of the project application templates. Subsequently, the IP should prefer to co-finance projects with sustainable solutions integrated in project design.	2,4 and 4.6 Air, Climate, Water, Soil, Biodiversity and Natural heritage, Landscape and Cultural heritage, Population and human health
Consider and assess the impact of ADRIONCYCLETOUR and Kras/Carso infrastructure on the local water system.	4.6 Water

Proposed enhancement measures and recommendations	Targeted SO / Environmental aspects
The IP should encourage the applicants to consider potential linkages between actions within ISO 1b (non-urban multimodal transport) and SO 4.6 (ADRIONCYCLETOUR).	4.6 and ISO 1b Air, Climate
The following action could be added to SO 2.6 (or any other SO, if considered a better fit from the IP programming team) as an IP enhancement measure: “Promoting business networks embedding climate change mitigation and adaptation (along with other relevant environmental factors) into existing business operations and core corporate decision-making processes (e.g. product development, etc.)”.	2.6 Climate

Following the public consultation phase, a recommendation is proposed with respect to the Landscape and Cultural heritage issue, i.e. that any potential infrastructure projects include the preventive archaeology procedures indicated by both national legislations, as best practice to guarantee the conservation of the state of the sites and assets of archaeological interest.

3.2 Monitoring measures

Article 10 of the SEA directive specifies that monitoring measures shall be prescribed in the context of a SEA, if significant negative impacts can be identified. Such monitoring measures shall allow to identify unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and take mitigating action.

No "significant negative impacts" have been identified in the SEA for any of 7 SOs of the Programme and only "non-significant negative impacts" have been identified for 2 out of 7 SOs. Furthermore, the whole IP is placing a strong emphasis on improving the environmental situation and addressing key environmental and sustainability concerns. For identified minor negative impacts, mitigation measures were foreseen, as well as recommendations for further enhancement of identified positive impacts of the IP. Many were addressed and integrated into the IP, the remaining are listed above in section 3.1.

Subsequently, **no mandatory monitoring measures are necessary to be implemented.**

However, to measure the enhancement of the IP impact and to ensure coherence with assessments of the SEA monitoring measures linked to the most sensitive and mostly affected aspects are recommended (ref. Environmental indicators below herein in section 4).

The monitoring of possible environmental effects shall be ideally reflected throughout the project cycle as follows:

➤ **Project application and contracting phase:**

- Proper information to applicants during the kick-off events in occasion of the launch of calls/invitations
- Consideration of possible environmental effects as a horizontal criterion in the application phase (i.e. quality assessment and project selection criteria: e.g. Does the project clearly describe how it will be in line and/or contribute to sustainable development? And environmental requirements – see annex 1)
- Possible involvement of external experts with the necessary environmental expertise for the quality assessment of project applications;
- Explanations and self-assessment of possible environmental effects in the Calls/Invitations (based on guiding questions);
- Obligation to comply with the relevant EU and national environmental legislation is embedded in the Subsidy Contract.

➤ **Project implementation phase:**

- Monitoring of project progress and implementation at different stages of the project life cycle

- On-the-spot checks of project pilot investments including the compliance with environmental regulatory requirements.

➤ **Project closure phase:**

- Reporting on environmental sustainability of the projects (if applicable, including the adherence to relevant EU and national environmental regulations).

4. Environmental monitoring indicators

Since no significant negative impacts have been identified in the SEA for any of seven SOs of the Programme and therefore no mandatory monitoring measures are necessary to be implemented, it is a recommendation included in the ER to measure the enhancement of the IP impact and to ensure its coherence with assessments of the SEA through monitoring measures linked to the most sensitive and mostly affected aspects, highlighted by the following indicators:

Table 3 – Environmental Indicators per Objectives.

Priorities	Specific Objectives	Indicators
PO 1 - A more competitive and smarter Europe	SO 1.1 - Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies	-
PO 2 - A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe	SO 2.4 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of the studies of the carrying capacity of the protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects. • Number of visitor management plans in protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects.
	SO 2.6 - Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	-
	SO 2.7 - Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution (also includes the POSEIDONE strategic project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of the studies of the carrying capacity of the protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects. • Number of visitor management plans in protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects.
PO 4 - A more social and inclusive Europe	SO 4.6 - Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation (also includes the ADRIOCYCLETOUT strategic project and another one for the joint management and sustainable development of the Classical Karst Area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of newly developed sustainable tourism products/services/activities, developed as a part of supported projects. • Number of sustainable mobility/accessibility strategies targeting tourists as one of key target groups, developed as a part of supported projects. • Number of visitor management plans in protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects.
ISO 1 – Better Cooperation Governance	ISO 1 (b) - Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular	-

with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles
in border regions

ISO 1 (c) - Build up mutual trust, in particular by
encouraging people-to-people actions

5. Monitoring team supporting the Managing Authority

Table 4 - Monitoring team supporting the Managing Authority.

Authority/body	Name of the institution	Contact name	email
Managing Authority	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia Central Directorate for Finance Accounting Unit	Laura Comelli	adg.itaslo@regione.fvg.it
Joint Secretariat	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia Central Directorate for Finance Accounting Unit	Aljosa Sosol	jts.itaslo@regione.fvg.it
Programme external Technical Assistance	Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini (FGB)	Iztok Skerlic	iskerlic@gmail.com

The Environmental Authorities of the Programme area are:

Table 5 - Environmental Authorities of the Programme area supporting the Managing Authority.

Authority/body	Name of the institution	Contact name	email
Environmental Authority FVG Region	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia Central Directorate Environment, Energy and Sustainable Development	Massimo Canali Nicolò Tudorov	ambiente@certregione.fvg.it nicolo.tudorov@regione.fvg.it

Authority/body	Name of the institution	Contact name	email
Environmental Authority Veneto Region	Area Safeguard and Security of the Territory Directorate Environmental Assessments, Legal Support and Trials Unit SEA, Appropriate Assessment, Natural Capital and NUVV	Luigi Masia	luigi.masia@regione.veneto.it areaterritorio.supportoamministrativo@pec.regione.veneto.it valutazioneimpattoambientale@regione.veneto.it valutazioniambientalsupportoamministrativo@pec.regione.veneto.it valutazioniambientalsupportoamministrativo@regione.veneto.it daniela.nalin@regione.veneto.it
Environmental Authority Republic of Slovenia	Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Environment Directorate, Strategic Environmental Assessment Division	Vesna Kolar Planinšič Alenka Cof	gp.mop@gov.si alenka.cof@gov.si

6. Reporting time schedule

The Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat shall collect project data and transmit them to the Environmental Authorities since 2024 on yearly basis, or whenever relevant for Programme implementation and monitoring process.

The Monitoring Committee shall be periodically duly informed.

7. Methods of collecting and systemization of the information functional to the monitoring

According to the technical tools available, data will be periodically collected by the Joint Secretariat through the ordinary monitoring activity in order to have the updated progress overview.

8. Attachments

1. Environmental monitoring requirements – Strategic Project ADRIONCYCLETOUT, Capitalisation call, SPF
2. Environmental Indicators

Annex 1 - Environmental monitoring requirements – Strategic Project ADRIONCYCLETOUR, Capitalisation call, SPF

Annex 1 A - Environmental monitoring requirements – Project ADRIONCYCLETOUR

8	DESCRIPTION
Adoption of “environmental sustainability by design” approach	Project should foresee sustainable solutions integrated in project design. The LP should explain how the proposed actions take into the consideration potential increase of tourist flows, improvement of the sustainability of their tourism offer and/or contribute to reduction of carbon footprint of their tourism products/services (e.g. new tourism products/services based on sustainable mobility solutions or public transport, systemic efforts to reduce or optimize tourism flows, etc.), as well as effective and sustainable use of natural resources or contribute to regeneration of the environment and ecosystem services.
Impact of project infrastructure on the local water system	A clear reference should be found in the AF even if the impact is neutral.
Potential linkages between actions within ISO 1b (non-urban multimodal transport) and ADRIONCYCETOUR	A clear reference should be found in the AF.
Impact on habitats and species of EU interest, deriving from conservation measures or management plans in force in the Natura 2000 network	Any impact reference should be found in the AF even if the impact is neutral. Any potential impact on Natura 2000 sites requires the activation of an Appropriate Assessment procedure.
With respect to Landscape and Cultural heritage issue, any potential infrastructure projects shall include the preventive archaeology procedures indicated by both national legislations.	It is intended as best practice to guarantee the conservation of the state of the sites and assets of archaeological interest, where relevant. A reference is included in the Statements (Annexes II and III).

Annex 1B - Environmental monitoring requirements – Capitalisation call

FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS UNDER SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:	REQUIREMENT	DESCRIPTION
2.4 and 4.6	Adoption of “environmental sustainability by design” approach	Projects should foresee sustainable solutions integrated in project design. The LP should explain how the proposed actions take into the consideration potential increase of tourist flows, improvement of the sustainability of their tourism offer and/or contribute to reduction of carbon footprint of their tourism products/services (e.g. new tourism products/services based on sustainable mobility solutions or public transport, systemic efforts to reduce or optimize tourism flows, etc.), as well as effective and sustainable use of natural resources or contribute to regeneration of the environment and ecosystem services.
4.6 and ISO1b	Potential linkages between actions within ISO 1b (non-urban multimodal transport) and SO 4.6	A clear reference should be found in the AF, if the case
2.6	Promoting business networks embedding climate change mitigation and adaptation (along with other relevant environmental factors) into existing business operations and core corporate decision-making processes (e.g. product development, etc.)	A clear reference should be found in the AF, if the case
2.7 and other SOs (for infrastructural investment projects)	Impact on habitats and species of EU interest, deriving from conservation measures or management plans in force in the Natura 2000 network	Any impact reference should be found in the AF even if the impact is neutral. Any potential impact on Natura 2000 sites requires the activation of an Appropriate Assessment procedure.
All SOs for infrastructural investment projects	With respect to Landscape and Cultural heritage issue, any potential infrastructure projects shall include the preventive archaeology procedures indicated by both national legislations.	It is intended as best practice to guarantee the conservation of the state of the sites and assets of archaeological interest, where relevant. A reference is included in the Statements (Annexes II and III).

In case Joint Secretariat assessors find that the listed environmental requirements are not considered in the Application Form, they might ask for integrations/clarifications during the assessing phase OR propose specific recommendations/prescriptions for the MC approval to be complied by funded project during its implementation.

A number of specific environmental indicators will be applied only to funded projects on the basis of the relevance and pertinence of the specific theme developed and will be periodically monitored by the Joint Secretariat.

It should also be noted that for these indicators neither intermediate nor final targets are envisaged as their purpose is to ascertain the impact of the projects funded by the IT-SI Programme on the environment.

Annex 1 C - Environmental monitoring requirements – SPF

The types of actions to be implemented by the SPF Operation shall be by design compatible with the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) principle according to article 17 of Regulation (EU) n. 2020/852.

In case Joint Secretariat assessors find that the criteria are not sufficiently fulfilled, they might make recommendations/prescriptions which the partnership is kindly invited to comply with.

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
Adoption of “environmental sustainability by design” approach	Project should foresee sustainable solutions integrated in project design. The SB should explain how the proposed actions take into the consideration potential increase of tourist flows, improvement of the sustainability of their tourism offer and/or contribute to reduction of carbon footprint of their tourism products/services (e.g. new tourism products/services based on sustainable mobility solutions or public transport, systemic efforts to reduce or optimize tourism flows, etc.), as well as effective and sustainable use of natural resources or contribute to regeneration of the environment and ecosystem services.
Impact of project infrastructure on the local water system	A clear reference should be found in the AF even if the impact is neutral.
Impact on habitats and species of EU interest, deriving from conservation measures or management plans in force in the Natura 2000 network	Any impact reference should be found in the AF even if the impact is neutral. Any potential impact on Natura 2000 sites requires the activation of an Appropriate Assessment procedure.
Potential linkages between actions within ISO 1b (non-urban multimodal transport) and SO 4.6	A clear reference should be found in the AF, if the case
With respect to Landscape and Cultural heritage issue, any potential infrastructure projects shall include the preventive archaeology procedures indicated by both national legislations.	It is intended as best practice to guarantee the conservation of the state of the sites and assets of archaeological interest, where relevant. A reference is included in the Statements (Annexes II and III).

Annex 2 - Environmental Indicators

Priorities	Specific Objectives	Indicators
PO 1 - A more competitive and smarter Europe	SO 1.1 - Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies	-
PO 2 - A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe	SO 2.4 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of the studies of the carrying capacity of the protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects. Number of visitor management plans in protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects.
	SO 2.6 - Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	-
	SO 2.7 - Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution (also includes the POSEIDONE strategic project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of the studies of the carrying capacity of the protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects. Number of visitor management plans in protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects.
PO 4 - A more social and inclusive Europe	SO 4.6 - Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation (also includes the ADRIOCYCLETOUT strategic project and another one for the joint management and sustainable development of the Classical Karst Area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of newly developed sustainable tourism products/services/activities, developed as a part of supported projects. Number of sustainable mobility/accessibility strategies targeting tourists as one of key target groups, developed as a part of supported projects. Number of visitor management plans in protected areas, prepared as a part of supported projects.
ISO 1 - Better Cooperation Governance	ISO 1 (b) - Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions	-
	ISO 1 (c) - Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions	-