

Information session for the Call08 of proposals for Test projects 22/09/2026

Meeting notes:

- **Call Scope and Strategic Framework:** Sophie SCARVELIS introduced Euro-MED08 as a roughly €20 million call for mature, action-oriented test projects addressing territorial resilience across three missions, while sustainable tourism and specific objective 2.4 remain closed.
 - **Programme Context:** Sophie SCARVELIS explained that Interreg Euro-MED covers 69 regions in 14 Mediterranean countries, has a €294 million 2021–2027 budget and seeks to support a climate-neutral and resilient society through cooperation among programme and associated partners.
 - **Eligible Missions:** Applicants must select one mission and one eligible specific objective. The open missions are Innovative Sustainable Economy, Natural Environment and Heritage, and Green Living Areas; Sustainable Tourism is not open for this call, and specific objective 2.4 is also excluded.
 - **Test Project Requirements:** Only thematic test projects are eligible. Projects must run for no more than 24 months, focus on a clearly defined territorial challenge, use a limited and coherent set of activities, deliver measurable improvements or validated solutions, and be ready for rapid implementation.
 - **Policy Alignment:** Applications should connect their intervention to relevant European, Mediterranean, national, regional or local strategies, including the Mediterranean Pact, revised MSSD, EU strategies for islands and coastal communities, the Nature Restoration Regulation, biodiversity strategies, the Zero Pollution Action Plan and the New European Bauhaus initiative.
- **Mission-Specific Project Priorities:** The mission officers set out the mandatory thematic boundaries and expected solutions for pollution reduction, ecosystem restoration and biodiversity, health and wellbeing, and urban agriculture and resilient food systems.
 - **Sustainable Economy:** The Innovative Sustainable Economy mission requires proposals to address at least one of three exclusive topics: reducing air pollution in construction, reducing water pollution in the agri-food sector, or reducing water plastic pollution. Relevant outputs may include climate-friendly technologies, sustainable business models, pollution-monitoring solutions, circular product design, water recovery and reuse, circular value chains, action plans and behaviour-change approaches.
 - **Natural Heritage:** The Natural Heritage mission focuses on ecosystem restoration or biodiversity resilience and management under specific objective 2.7. Restoration proposals must demonstrate a contribution to implementing the Nature Restoration Regulation and integrate science, policy and planning; possible outputs include restoration methodologies, decision-support tools, monitoring systems, governance frameworks and restoration plans.
 - **Biodiversity Approach:** Biodiversity proposals should identify the relevant regulations and conservation priorities rather than relying only on a general biodiversity strategy. Transnational management of natural resources, ecological connectivity, monitoring protocols, cross-border governance and coordinated action plans for priority species or habitats were identified as possible approaches.
 - **Green Living Areas:** The Green Living Areas mission covers wellbeing and health in living areas, requiring at least one co-funded partner with health competence, and urban agriculture and resilient food systems. Projects

may combine participatory processes, citizen involvement, health monitoring, multifunctional green infrastructure, neighbourhood regeneration and integrated local food governance.

- **Partnership And Project Design:** Sophie SCARVELIS explained the minimum partnership structure, the distinction between co-funded and associated partners, and the need for partners with direct operational and policy competencies to deliver pilots and transfer results.
 - **Eligibility Conditions:** A partnership must include at least five partners based in five different countries in the Euro-MED cooperation area, including at least two partners from EU programme regions. The lead partner must be a public body or body governed by public law, and profit-making private partners from IPA countries are now eligible.
 - **Partner Roles:** Co-funded partners from EU or IPA programme countries receive 80% co-financing, implement activities and report expenditure. Associated partners may come from any country, receive no project funding, and can contribute as advisers, observers or end users; appropriate travel and accommodation costs may be covered by co-funded partners.
 - **Qualitative Partnership:** The team recommended a manageable partnership of approximately eight to ten partners, with direct competence in the selected field and policy implementation. Partners responsible for pilots must own the relevant land or facility or provide an agreement in principle from its owner; geographical balance is also assessed.
 - **Transnational Implementation:** Local pilots must address a shared transnational Mediterranean challenge rather than operate as disconnected national activities. Partners should use common or comparable methodologies, jointly assess results, develop a transnational output after local testing, and design results for replication, adaptation and transfer.
 - **Landowner Agreements:** A landowner agreement may be required even where no physical investment is planned if the project needs to work on or with a specific site. The purpose is to demonstrate that access, permissions and implementation conditions are secured before the project begins.
- **Budget And Compulsory Activities:** The call limits each project to €2 million with 80% EU and 20% national co-financing, and requires projects to budget for carbon-footprint monitoring, governance-project cooperation, communication and an Academy training contribution.
 - **Budget And Timing:** Projects may last a maximum of 24 months, including closure, with activities expected to start around June 2027. The maximum project budget is €2 million, comprising 80% EU contribution and 20% national co-financing; a €37,000 preparation-cost lump sum may be shared among partners.
 - **Carbon Monitoring:** Applicants must design the project to reduce emissions, then use the programme's ZeroCO2MED calculator to calculate and report the project carbon footprint during reporting periods. Project-level compensation is not required; the collected data will support a possible programme-level compensation action.
 - **Governance Cooperation:** Projects must reserve staff time and budget for cooperation with the mission's governance projects, including thematic working groups, institutional dialogue, networking, capacity-building, transfer activities, data provision and participation in face-to-face or communication events.
 - **Communication And Academy:** Each approved project must produce a one-minute project video and contribute one training course to the Euro-MED Academy. Relevant high-quality outputs may also be submitted to the programme library, where governance projects conduct peer review and select materials with strong transfer potential.
- **Application And Assessment Process:** The new procedure separates written and oral assessment into two consecutive eliminatory phases, with applications

submitted in Jems by 13 November 2026, annexes by 27 November, and final selection expected in May 2027.

- **Written Submission:** Applicants must complete and validate the application in Jems in English or French by 13 November 2026 at 13:00 Brussels time; section A.2 must be provided in both languages. The courtesy Word form is guidance only and does not replace the online Jems submission.
- **Required Annexes:** By 27 November 2026 at 13:00 Brussels time, applicants must upload signed partner and associated-partner declarations and, where relevant, statements concerning capacity and investment principles. Additional annexes include landowner agreements for pilots on sites not owned by the partner and detailed procurement calendars for relevant external expertise, equipment, infrastructure and works.
- **Written Assessment:** The eligibility check is followed by assessment of territorial relevance and strategic alignment, horizontal principles, partnership composition and capacity, intervention logic, work-plan quality and budget consistency. Scores use a 0–5 scale; a score of 2 or less for project relevance, partnership relevance or the work plan causes automatic rejection. Proposals need at least 24 of 35 weighted points, and only the 30 highest-ranked proposals proceed to the oral phase.
- **Oral Assessment:** Shortlisted applicants receive at least ten working days' notice and deliver an English presentation of up to 30 minutes, followed by up to 15 minutes of questions, using the programme's PowerPoint template. The lead applicant must be the main presenter and may appoint up to two supporting representatives. The oral phase assesses project approach, transnationality, partnership articulation and coordination, implementation quality, sustainability and any written-assessment clarifications.
- **Final Threshold:** The oral phase contributes up to 25 weighted points, producing a maximum overall score of 60. Projects require a global weighted score of at least 42 out of 60 to be recommended for funding, subject to the Programme Monitoring Committee and available budget.
- **Key Dates And Applicant Resources:** Sophie SCARVELIS and Olga directed applicants to the Euro-MED website, Jems, the mission partner forums, the FAQ and national contact points, with technical seminars scheduled for 8 October and 5 November 2026.
 - **Application Calendar:** Jems opens on 1 October 2026. The technical seminar on 8 October covers the application form and Jems process, while the 5 November meeting addresses remaining questions. Written applications close on 13 November, annexes close on 27 November, written assessment is expected through February or March 2027, oral presentations are expected in March or April, final selection in May, and project start is expected in June 2027.
 - **Website Documents:** Applicants were told to consult the dedicated Call 08 webpage, Terms of Reference, Programme Manual, courtesy application form, Jems guide, oral-hearing PowerPoint, Cooperation Programme, Communication Strategy, Results Amplification Strategy and online FAQ before submitting.
 - **Partner Search:** The programme website provides one forum per mission for publishing project ideas or responding to consortium searches. Users must create an account and log in to post or reply; national contact points can also help identify partners and mobilise networks.
 - **Questions And Individual Advice:** The Joint Secretariat does not plan individual preliminary meetings with applicants. Applicants should use the FAQ and helpdesk, submit questions through the website rather than by email, attend the technical seminars, and consult their national contact points for proposal guidance, eligibility checks and partner searches.

- **Clarifications Raised:** The team confirmed that existing Horizon or LIFE solutions may be tested if adapted to Euro-MED and the call; treated-water technologies may be eligible only when clearly linked to reducing agri-food water pollution and a transnational approach; there is no formal limit on an institution's number of applications, but capacity will be assessed; and pilots need not occur in all five countries, although testing must take place in more than one territory.

Summing up:

- **Seminar Materials:** Publish the recorded seminar and PowerPoint presentation on the programme website. (SCARVELIS)
- **Call Documentation:** Update the call page with the corrected partnership guidance stating the recommended maximum of 8–10 partners for test projects. (SCARVELIS)
- **Technical Guidance:** Attend the online technical seminar covering application-form content, JEMS completion and expenditure eligibility. (Applicants)
- **Application Preparation:** Open and review the JEMS application form once it becomes available, and prepare any technical questions for the 8 October seminar. (Applicants)
- **Application Submission:** Validate the completed application form in JEMS in English or French before the submission deadline. (Applicants)
- **Supporting Annexes:** Download, sign, date and upload the mandatory partner declarations and capacity/compliance statements in JEMS. (Applicants)
- **Pilot Site Authorisation:** Secure and upload an agreement in principle from each relevant landowner or facility owner where a partner is not the owner of a pilot site. (Applicants)
- **Procurement Planning:** Prepare and upload a detailed calendar of planned procurement procedures for external expertise, infrastructure, works and equipment. (Applicants)
- **Eligibility Verification:** Confirm the eligibility of each organisation's legal status and lead-partner role with the relevant national authority before submitting the proposal. (Applicants)
- **Partner Networking:** Create or respond to consortium-partner posts in the relevant Interreg Euro-MED forum, using a registered programme-website account. (Applicants)
- **Applicant Questions:** Submit unresolved programme questions through the website help desk after checking the programme documents and FAQ. (Applicants)
- **Technical Consultation:** Raise detailed financial, work-package and application-form questions at the 8 October technical meeting rather than seeking individual preliminary meetings with the Joint Secretariat. (Applicants)