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What is Cohesion Policy?

- Aims to ensure balanced and sustainable levels of development across EU regions in order to strengthen economic and social cohesion.

- Focuses on helping improve quality of life by making regions more attractive, innovative and competitive places to live and work.

- For the period 2007-2013, the EU is investing approximately 30% of its total budget on Cohesion Policy.
How is Cohesion Policy implemented?

- During 2007-2013, Cohesion Policy is being implemented through the use of three main financial instruments:
  - European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
  - European Social Fund (ESF)
  - The Cohesion Fund

- Malta has benefited from ERDF, ESF and the Cohesion Fund since EU Accession in 2004.
Malta’s Experience of Cohesion Policy 2004-2006

- For the period 2004-2006, Malta obtained an allocation of €84.4 million through ERDF, ESF and the Cohesion Fund.

- These funds were supplemented by €30.6 million worth of national Funds.

- The main sectors that have benefited from the ERDF and Cohesion Fund 2004-2006 include the Environment, Transport, Tourism, Education, Infrastructure and Enterprise sectors.

- A total of 92 projects are being financed in Malta and Gozo.
Cohesion Policy 2004-2006 and the Environment

- €44.18 million was invested in 8 environmental projects co-financed by ERDF and the Cohesion Fund.

- These include projects focusing on waste management, improvement of drinking water and air quality, sewage treatment infrastructure and nature-protection.
Cohesion Policy 2004-2006 and Natura 2000

- Of these projects, one focuses on the island of Fifla, which is a designated Natura 2000 site, classified as a Special Area of Conservation.

- Marine Scientific Surveys Around Fifla has a total project cost of €194,161 and is being implemented by MEPA.
Project: Marine Scientific Surveys Around Fifla.

The main objectives of this project include:

- Detailed surveys and documenting marine biodiversity in the 1 nautical mile radius around Fifla;

- Assessing the marine ecosystem. Identifying main marine habitats, particularly those which can classify it as a marine Site of Community Importance;

- Drafting of a management and monitoring plan for the area.

- Formulating data sheets for important species to enable identification of ‘no entry zones’.
Cohesion Policy 2007-2013

- A total of €855 million worth of EU Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund has been allocated to Malta by Cohesion Policy 2007-2013. This is being complemented by 15% public co-financing.

- The strategic framework for the investment of these funds is outlined by the National Strategic Reference Framework document, approved by the Commission in December 2006. This document is being implemented through two Operational Programme documents.

- There are also three main Territorial Cooperation Programmes, funded by ERDF.
• Operational Programme I, ‘Investing in Competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life’ envisages a significant contribution to improving the environment. OPI is co-financed by ERDF and the Cohesion Fund.

• OPI addresses the need to upgrade environmental infrastructure and integrate environmentally-friendly or climate-friendly measures throughout the programme.

• It reflects the National Sustainable Development Strategy and ensures mainstreaming of Sustainable Development throughout.
OPI – Axes which are directly related to the Improvement of the Environment

• Axis 1: Enhancing Knowledge and Innovation: R&D and aid schemes on eco-innovation.

• Axis 2: Promoting Sustainable Tourism.

• Axis 4: Upgrading Services of General Economic Interest

• Axis 5: Sustaining the Environment.

• Axis 6: Urban Regeneration and Improving the Quality of Life.
Promoting Sustainable Tourism

• Of these, Priority Axis 2, entitled Promoting Sustainable Tourism, will support the implementation of Natura 2000 plans on sites which have a direct impact on the tourism industry.

• Priority Axis 2 recognises the need to conserve and protect the environment, not only as an end in itself, but also due to the strong links between environment and sustainable tourism.

• Priority Axis 2 therefore aims to support:
  - Environment protection campaigns as well as other measures to strengthen the environment;
  - The implementation of Natura 2000 plans on sites which have a direct impact on the tourism industry - propagation of native woodland, other habitats and fauna can sustain niche tourism and provide recreational and educational opportunities to the public.
Natura 2000: Relation between ERDF and EAFRD

• ERDF: Implementation of Natura 2000 plans and natural heritage operations in areas which are dependent on tourism or related to areas identified as tourism zones.

• EAFRD: Preparation of Natura 2000 conservation and management plans. EAFRD can fund interventions in the case of actions associated with the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the natural and cultural heritage in areas identified as rural.
Applying for ERDF funds
ERDF: Project Selection Process

• Entities which aim to submit an application for ERDF funding can answer an Open Call for Applications, issued by the Managing Authority.

• Such calls are advertised in the media and the MA’s website: www.ppcd.gov.mt

• Each call is accompanied by guidance notes on the application form and also by information sessions to provide information on the application and selection process.
Territorial Cooperation Programmes, 2007-2013

• Former Interreg III Community Initiative Programmes co-funded by ERDF. These also have an environmental dimension.

• The Programmes are:
  Crossborder cooperation Italia-Malta Programme
  Transnational cooperation Med Zone Programme
  Interreg IV C Programme
Further information:

- Further information, key documents, application packs and guidance notes can be downloaded from www.ppcd.gov.mt

- Queries can be addressed to our Email Helpdesk: Info.ppcd@gov.mt
Thank you for your attention