

## Do no significant harm (DNSH) assessment for Interreg VI-A Estonia-Latvia programme 2021-2027

**POLICY OBJECTIVE 1:** A more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation and regional ICT connectivity.

**Special objective:** (iii) enhancing sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including by productive investments.

**Main activities:**

- Clustering, networking, mentoring and practical (joint) training activities for raising the capacity of SMEs to **introduce innovation in product development**. Implementing the gained knowledge;
- Joint innovation and development in product/service development/improvement (including studies, existing research-based development process, prototyping);
- Joint marketing to reach new export markets, including market research, attending trade fairs etc.;
- Development of cross-border cluster cooperation;
- Joint activities for technology and/or **green transfer** and introducing innovation in SMEs;
- **Collaboration and experience exchange in science-industry technology transfer** and joint R&D, mapping scientific services and equipment available for companies in Latvia and Estonia, promotion of cross-border knowledge and technology transfer activities;
- Finding and implementing joint **digitalization solutions**, e.g. taking up new software, data digitation, digital technologies, AI, automation, robotics etc.

Part 1 – Member States should filter the six environmental objectives to identify those that require a substantive assessment. For each measure, please indicate which of the below environmental objectives, as defined in Article 17 (*‘Significant harm to environmental objectives’*) of the Taxonomy Regulation, require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure:

Please indicate which of the environmental objectives below require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure	Yes	No	Justification if ‘No’ has been selected
Climate change mitigation		x	Supported innovative activities follow environmental objectives and support green transfer. Employing digital solutions helps to enlarge energy and resource efficiency therefore reducing

			the impact on climate change. Proposed types of actions are focusing on clustering and cooperation, as well knowledge and technology transfer.
Climate change adaptation		x	The activity that is supported by the measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
The sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources		x	The activity that is supported by the measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
The circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling		x	Supported innovative activities follow environmental objectives and support green transfer. Employing digital solutions help to enlarge resource efficiency and therefore reduce waste.
Pollution prevention and control to air, water or land		x	The activity that is supported by the measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems		x	The activity that is supported by the measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.

***The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible under the Estonian Programme for Cohesion Policy Funds 2021-2027 DNSH assessment and based on RRF DNSH technical guidance (measure 1.10: promoting entrepreneurship and innovation, special objective (iii) enhancing sustainable economic growth and competitiveness of SMEs and creating jobs in SMEs, among other things through productive investments).***

**POLICY OBJECTIVE 2:** A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment,

the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility.

**Special objective:** (vii) enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity, and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution.

**Main activities:**

- Actions aimed at safeguarding, maintaining, and restoring of ecosystems and protection and preservation of cross-border biodiversity and key species;
- Data gathering and data-driven biodiversity monitoring, analysing methods of collecting data, designing, adapting methods;
- Testing in field the best measures for protection and restoration of biotopes in bad status;
- Restoration and management of species and habitats, including re-introduction of species (for example freshwater pearl mussel) and taking into account implementation of Prioritized Action Framework (PAF);
- Tackling invasive alien species including promoting common practices between Estonia and Latvia and increased public awareness;
- Establishment of innovative measures for collecting biomass from semi-natural grasslands, residue of forestry, agriculture (for energy, composting, soil structure improvement, secondary products, etc);
- Small-scale pilot activities in urban areas for preserving biodiversity;
- Innovative and best practice measures to increase pollinator and other native animal species richness in urban areas (biodiversity friendly grass management; insect hotels; hedgehog, bat and bird friendly gardens; ponds), raising awareness about nature-friendly urban green areas;
- Joint actions for tackling the cross-border challenges in the programme area such as pollution in shared water bodies, research on and management cross-border green networks, developing nature objects for recreational purposes and sustainable nature tourism, consideration of biodiversity at different levels of planning, development and implementation of solutions for new infrastructure (animal tunnels, pass ways) to avoid fragmentation of animal populations, development and implementation of nature-friendly approaches to manage the sides of roads and railways, creating new buffer zones and managing landscape elements important for species and habitats;

**Part 1 – Member States should filter the six environmental objectives to identify those that require a substantive assessment. For each measure, please indicate which of the below environmental objectives, as defined in Article 17 (*‘Significant harm to environmental objectives’*) of the Taxonomy Regulation, require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure:**

Please indicate which of the environmental objectives below require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure	Yes	No	Justification if 'No' has been selected
Climate change mitigation		x	The foreseeable indicative activities will not cause harm to climate change mitigation as they are focusing on restoring ecosystems which will support and improve climate change mitigation. Innovative measures for biomass gathering and for possible use for energy is only limited to waste and residues and the project must be in line with the special policy objective. All biomass projects involving possible energy use must conform to Articles 29-31 of Directive (EU) 2018/2001 (RED II) regarding sustainability criteria.
Climate change adaptation		x	This measure helps to improve adaptation to climate change by restoring ecosystems. Therefore, it supports climate change adaptation.
The sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources		x	By restoring ecosystems, this measure helps to protect water resources by enabling a habitat for species as well as maintaining and improving the status of the water bodies.
The circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling		x	The foreseeable indicative activities will not cause harm to circular economy as main activities are focusing on restoring ecosystems. The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
Pollution prevention and control to air, water or land		x	The main activities of this measure prevent pollution of air, water or land by restoring ecosystems and by tackling challenges of pollution and restoring the status of water bodies. Therefore, activities are supporting pollution prevention and control to air, water and land.

The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems	x		
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2. Part 2 – Member States should provide a substantive DNSH assessment for those environmental objectives that require it. For each measure, please answer the questions below, for those environmental objectives identified under Part 1 as requiring a substantive assessment:

Questions	No	Substantive justification
<p><i>The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems:</i> Is the measure expected to be:</p> <p>(i) significantly detrimental to the good condition <sup>(5)</sup> and resilience of ecosystems; or</p> <p>(ii) detrimental to the conservation status of habitats and species, including those of Union interest?</p>	x	<p>(i) The indicative activities are in line with the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the focus on nature protection and restoration. The Programme’s activity invests in environmental protection and in the restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems. Regarding the innovative collection and use of biomass, it is strictly limited to waste and residues. When semi-natural grasslands are being maintained and restored, it requires grass cutting and it will result in residues (hay and wooden residues) that could be used for secondary purposes (e.g. for innovative use for energy or composting or for other purposes). This activity will not increase the demand for land or put any additional pressure on ecosystems. All biomass projects involving possible energy use must conform to Articles 29-31 of Directive (EU) 2018/2001 (RED II) regarding sustainability criteria. In instances where applicants are involved with energy production from biomass, only the production of energy from residues and waste will be allowed. Grass cutting must be planned and carried out avoiding the disturbance of nesting.</p> <p>(ii) The main activities of the measure are dedicated to restoring ecosystems and to protect species. Any activities involving biomass collection and use must avoid negative impacts on conservation status of habitats and species, including those of EU interest according to EU Habitats and Birds Directive and negative effect of the integrity of Natura 2000 site.</p>

***The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.***

**POLICY OBJECTIVE 4:** A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights.

**Special objective:** (vi) enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation.

**Main activities:**

- Jointly developing sustainable and accessible tourism products and services based on diverse natural and cultural heritage of the programme area, e.g. tourism routes, joint offers, joint brands, etc;
- The physical improvement of existing sites that are of natural or cultural heritage, which are integral components of joint tourism products or services;
- The improvement of the tourism offer, sites, products and services in terms of accessibility to all groups of society, e.g. the elderly, children, families with children and disabled people;
- Marketing of the created products and services, different types of marketing events and activities: media advertising, participation in fairs, visits, etc.

**Part 1 – Member States should filter the six environmental objectives to identify those that require a substantive assessment. For each measure, please indicate which of the below environmental objectives, as defined in Article 17 (*‘Significant harm to environmental objectives’*) of the Taxonomy Regulation, require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure:**

Please indicate which of the environmental objectives below require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure	Yes	No	Justification if ‘No’ has been selected
Climate change mitigation		x	Supporting tourism and movement might increase GHG emissions from transport, but on the other hand it is enabling local businesses to develop their services sustainably and promoting local activities. As such, the measure is not expected to

			result in a negative effect to climate change mitigation.
Climate change adaptation		x	Improving physical infrastructure enables to cope with climate change and support adaptation. It is not foreseen that the measure affects climate change adaptation negatively.
The sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources		x	The measure supports sustainable tourism which includes sustainable use of natural resources. It is not foreseen that the measure affects sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources negatively.
The circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling		x	<p>The measure supports sustainable tourism which includes sustainable use of natural resources. It is not foreseen that the measure affects sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources negatively.</p> <p>In case projects involve physical improvements of existing natural sites non-hazardous and local materials need to be used. Cultural heritage restoration requirements usually require the use of nature-based materials.</p>
Pollution prevention and control to air, water or land		x	The measure supports sustainable tourism. It is not foreseen that the measure affects sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources negatively.
The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems		x	The measure is supporting sustainable use of natural resources.

***The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.***

**INTERREG SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:** ISO1 A better cooperation governance

**Special objective:** (ii) 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.

**Main activities:**

- Enhancing the adaption and provision of **joint public services** through pilot actions that tackle border area obstacles;
- Encouraging the collection and transformation of **regional data** into (joint) new services;
- Encouraging the local municipality level cross-border cooperation actions through **cross-border networks, strategies and pilot actions**;
- Pilot activities and implemented solutions for setting up public services;
- Implementing solutions for development needs other than services;
- Compiling cross-border strategies and/or actions plans followed by joint implementation actions.

**Part 1 – Member States should filter the six environmental objectives to identify those that require a substantive assessment. For each measure, please indicate which of the below environmental objectives, as defined in Article 17 (*‘Significant harm to environmental objectives’*) of the Taxonomy Regulation, require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure:**

Please indicate which of the environmental objectives below require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure	Yes	No	Justification if ‘No’ has been selected
Climate change mitigation		x	It is not expected that the measure is directly related to GHG emissions. When developing strategies and action plans for public services, climate change mitigation and reducing GHG emissions needs to be considered.
Climate change adaptation		x	The measure is not associated with installations of infrastructure or introduction of skills that are expected to result in maladaptation to the climate. When developing strategies or actions plans, public services need to take into

			account climate change adaption solutions when appropriate.
The sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources		x	This measure does not directly support installations of infrastructure that could cause significant damage to water or marine resources.
The circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling		x	The measure is not associated with direct or indirect impacts to circular economy objectives. When developing strategies or actions plans, public services need to take into account circular economy-based solutions.
Pollution prevention and control to air, water or land		x	The measure is not associated with increased pollution to air, water or land (including direct and indirect effects).
The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems		x	The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.

***The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.***

**INTERREG SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:** ISO1 A better cooperation governance

**Special objective:** (iii) build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions.

**Main activities:**

- Joint education, training and exchange activities;
- Experience exchange trips and events for municipal and NGO staff;
- Improvement of services in border regions, and capacity building for relevant organisations;
- Skills transfer between communities to promote employment;

- Activities aiming at conservation, preservation and adaptation or development of cultural traditions, heritage, cultural events, meetings etc;
- Joint sports games; training camps, experience exchange of trainers.

1. Part 1 – Member States should filter the six environmental objectives to identify those that require a substantive assessment. For each measure, please indicate which of the below environmental objectives, as defined in Article 17 (*‘Significant harm to environmental objectives’*) of the Taxonomy Regulation, require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure:

Please indicate which of the environmental objectives below require a substantive DNSH assessment of the measure	Yes	No	Justification if ‘No’ has been selected
Climate change mitigation		x	The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
Climate change adaptation		x	The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
The sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources		x	The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
The circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling		x	The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
Pollution prevention and control to air, water or land		x	The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.
The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems		x	The measure has an insignificant foreseeable impact on this environmental objective, taking into account both the direct and primary indirect effects across the life cycle.

***The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle since they are not expected to have any significant negative environmental impact due to their nature.***