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I. Level 2 – proposed guiding principles:

Apart from complying with the six broad eligibility criteria spelt out in the action plan, to deserve being labelled by TSG-3 as projects of macro-regional importance, projects should¹:

- A. Explore and translate into practice innovative ideas and concepts of direct relevance to the retained priority actions.
- B. Demonstrate positive externalities, notably in terms of cost-efficient ecosystem services, ensuing from applying an ecosystem approach² and the principle of sustainable development across the entire EUSAIR territory (and not exclusively in legally protected areas).
- D. Demonstrate how the challenge at hand can be addressed more efficiently than via projects with boundaries strictly determined by administrative/jurisdictional criteria (NUTS 1-2-3)³;
- E. Demonstrate sustainable practices in fisheries, aquaculture, agriculture, forestry, extractive industries, transportation and energy and support/pave the way for projects relative to eco-tourism.
- F. Complement/are in synergy with projects under country-specific and Interreg Operational Programmes targeting Thematic Objective-6 (Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency) or Thematic Objective-5 (Climate change adaptation and mitigation) and affecting the geographical area concerned by the project;
- G. Complement projects aimed at promoting an ecosystem approach, sustainable development and/or at maintaining/restoring marine, coastal and terrestrial biodiversity under EUSDR and EUSALP (as far as SI and North Italian regions included in EUSAIR are concerned);
- H. Increase capacity for assessing possible adverse effects on the proposed project of major projects carried out or foreseen in the same geographical area and hence help spell out realistic milestones and targets for the project.

II. Examples of Level-3 thematically-focused criteria (to be completed by TSG-3 members, possibly assisted by specialised scientific experts):

¹ Whilst, 'labelled' projects should ideally comply with all the guiding principles listed, it will be up to TSG-3 to assess which ones carry more weight.

² The ecosystem approach broaches any issue in a non-fragmented way, looking at it as part of a complex network of interactions and interdependencies amongst living organisms and between these and their physical environment. From this follows that, rather than perceiving and addressing a given problem as pertaining to one policy area only, possible mutual impacts of different policy areas are considered as well as impacts on the structure and functions of the ecosystems in which these policies play out.

³ In other words can the area covered by the project be shown to be a functional area?

Under Priority Action 1 (Topic 1.a): Increase marine knowledge: Contribute to filling knowledge gaps reg. pressures on coastal areas and/or reg. exposure of marine species in the Adriatic-Ionian sea basins to underwater marine noise and derelict fishing gear, ...

Under Priority Action 2 (Topic 1.b): Large-scale pollution contingency plan must be in accordance with the requirements of International Conventions and EU legislation, ...

Under Priority Action 3 (Topic 2): Target particularly vulnerable terrestrial habitats or biodiversity hotspots, ...

Under Priority Action 4 (Topic 2): Maintain or restore wetland-generated ecosystem services under imminent risk of irreversible degradation; target karst fields under cumulative pressures, ...