

TOPIC SECTION 1 – FARMING SYSTEMS IN THE NEXUS

TABLE 5 SPECIFIC CALL CONDITION FOR CALL 1.2.1



Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus

Topic 1.2.1-2025	Enhancement of Sustainable Farming Systems within Mediterranean Wetlands for Conservation and Coexistence
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective: 2/LAND AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY 4/ SMART AND SUSTAINABLE FARMING.
Contribution to EU policies	European Green Deal: EU biodiversity strategy: EU Adaption Strategy: Farm to Fork Strategy: Zero Pollution Action Plan: the new EU Nature Restoration Law
CALL SPECIFIC CONDITIONS	
Expected EU contribution per project	PRIMA estimates that a contribution of around EUR 2.7 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.8 million
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of 36 months would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.
Type of Action	Innovation Action
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Activities are expected to achieve TRL 6-8 by the end of the project. Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the TRL self-assessment tool to accurately determine the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of their proposal.
Eligibility conditions	Please refer to PRIMA Work Programme 2025 General Annexes Section Entities eligible for funding. Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the standard eligibility conditions (section), in this Work Programme, consortia must include at least an additional legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC) . Additional Eligibility Condition for this call Due to the scope of this topic, consortia must include at least one small and medium-sized enterprises ²⁰ established in a PS in the research consortia.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	PRIMA MGA (multi-beneficiary), based on Horizon Europe MGA . The rules are described in the PRIMA Work Programme 2025 General Annexes Section.
Submission and evaluation procedure	The call will be organised according to a single-stage submission process. A full proposal (maximum 45 pages) must be submitted according to the timeline for submitting application (Table 6). A timeline for submitting and evaluating applications can be found in Section 1, Calendar of the Calls.
Consortium agreement	Participants in projects resulting from this call for Proposals must conclude a consortium agreement before the PRIMA grant agreement's signature.
PRIMA specific KPIs	Applicants must select at least three PRIMA-specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from Table 2: PRIMA-specific KPIs, Linked Operational Objectives, and Descriptions. A KPI Handbook will be available at the call opening, detailing descriptions, data collection methods, and targets for each KPI. Additionally, applicants propose custom KPIs to capture project-specific impacts that align with PRIMA's objectives for enhanced impact measurement.

Expected Outcomes: Aligned with the objectives of the European Green Deal and [EU Nature restoration law](#), and the upcoming European Water Resilience Strategy, the initiative to enhance

wetland restoration in the Mediterranean serves as a catalyst for achieving the EU's climate goals outlined for both 2030 and 2050. It aligns with the [Union for the Mediterranean's Greener Med Agenda 2030](#), which underscores the pivotal role of wetlands in furnishing vital ecosystem services for the region's environmental well-being and economic advancement. Wetlands²¹ are regions where water influences the environment, fostering a unique ecosystem rich in biodiversity. They include coastal marshes, lagoons, rivers, estuaries that are supporting different varieties of plant and animal life. Successful proposals will contribute to enhance wetland agro-ecosystems sustainably, to expand knowledge on wetland status in the Mediterranean and their restoration potential, and to provide evidence-based policy recommendations for a better integration and coexistence of agriculture and wetlands.

Project results are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Increased resilience of Mediterranean wetland agroecosystems by safeguarding ecosystem services provisions especially for flood and drought control, while producing food (or feeds) and contributing to the socio-economic development of the region
- Comprehensive Assessment and Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and carbon sequestration, unique to Mediterranean wetlands, thereby contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.
- Promote innovative, Mediterranean-specific practices that support agrobiodiversity within wetland agroecosystems. Examples include integrating traditional crop varieties like salt-tolerant barley, durum wheat, and native legumes that thrive in wetland-adjacent soils, thereby preserving genetic diversity while adapting to local conditions.
- Evidence-Based Policy Recommendations for the sustainable management and conservation of Mediterranean wetland agroecosystems, ensuring their long-term viability and contribution to regional sustainability goals.

Scope: This call aims to enhance wetland agroecosystems sustainability in the Mediterranean by fostering innovative and cost-effective solutions through a holistic Water-Ecosystems-Food-Nexus approach to comprehensively address the interdependencies and interactions between wetlands, agroecosystems, water resources, and ecosystem services. The adoption of sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices is paramount for conserving wetlands and fostering their unique biodiversity.

Specifically, the call emphasizes the development and implementation of sustainable agriculture practices that include robust drought management strategies tailored to the Mediterranean region. These strategies are crucial for preserving wetlands' functions in delivering ecosystem services, managing floods, and mitigating the impacts of drought. The overarching goal is to enhance environmental resilience and socio-economic development in the region by safeguarding the essential roles of wetlands.

Proposed activities should cover at least one of the following aspects:

- Conducting a comprehensive assessment²² of Mediterranean wetlands, evaluating their current condition, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions profiles, and potential for carbon

²⁰ 'Small or medium-sized enterprise' or 'SME' means a micro, small or medium-sized enterprise as defined in Article 2 of the Annex to Recommendation 2003/361/EC (27)''

²¹ According to the Ramsar Convention for the Protection of Wetlands (Articles 1.1 and 2.1) wetlands are defined as: "areas of marsh, fen, peat land or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres [...] and may incorporate riparian and coastal zones adjacent to the wetlands, and islands or bodies of marine water deeper than six metres at low tide lying within the wetlands". <https://medwet.org/aboutwetlands/> a

²² A comprehensive assessment of Mediterranean wetlands involves evaluating their ecological health, measuring greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O), and determining their carbon sequestration potential. It also includes assessing the economic and social value of their ecosystem services, such as food production and water filtration.

mitigation. These assessments must consider key gases (CO₂, CH₄, and NO), as well as the carbon value of services like food production.

- Examine the trade-offs between wetland restoration for climate and biodiversity benefits and the delivery of other services (including food production), along with methods to avoid or mitigate these trade-offs.
- Exploring the integration of existing local knowledge and practices: embracing a holistic Water- Food-Ecosystems Nexus perspective is essential to comprehensively address the interdependencies between wetlands and the water, food, and ecosystems sectors. This entails integrating multidisciplinary approaches that consider the complex linkages between wetland ecosystems and the provision of water resources, ecosystem services, and ensuring food production. Including new or existing insights from other regions facing similar challenges in wetland restoration is also recommended to enhance understanding and applicability. These solutions will integrate sustainable agriculture practices, habitat restoration efforts, improved water management techniques, and effective drought management strategies tailored to diverse representative wetlands in the area. The implemented solutions should be assessed through appropriate methodologies and indicators and be translated into policies for integration of these approaches into existing environmental and land use regulations.
- Evaluate the socio-economic costs and benefits of investing in wetland conservation, sustainable agriculture practices, and the role of wetlands in enhancing drought resilience and improving local community livelihoods. Insights into these costs and benefits at the farming practice level are essential for encouraging adoption by farmers.

Proposals should actively implement a [Multi-Actor Approach \(MAA\)](#), engaging a wide range of stakeholders—including universities and research centers, public authorities, civil society organizations, local communities, businesses, conservation and environmental groups, farmers, and agencies responsible for agriculture, water management, and land use planning.—throughout the project lifecycle to ensure relevance and impact. Additionally, **policy briefs** are encouraged as key outputs, distilling research findings into actionable insights for decision-makers.

Projects may choose to establish links with the [EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change](#), and [A Soil Deal for Europe](#), dedicating resources for coordination and joint activities, such as shared communication and dissemination efforts with relevant Mission-funded projects. Projects producing data relevant to Mission Soil objectives are encouraged to contribute their findings to the [European Union Soil Observatory \(EUSO\)](#) via [SoilWISE](#) and may collaborate with the [Mission Soil Living Labs](#) to test PRIMA innovations in sustainable soil management. Complementary efforts with [Horizon Europe](#) projects and partnerships, such as [European Partnership on Agroecology](#), the [LIFE programme](#), and [European Regional Development Fund \(ERDF\)](#) projects focused on wetlands, are also encouraged to maximize impact.

The assessment identifies the wetlands' resilience to climate change and develops policy and management recommendations based on the findings. Additionally, it establishes a monitoring framework to track changes and ensure effective strategies for carbon mitigation. Some projects related, already working on similar approaches: [ALFAwetlands](#), [WaterLANDS](#), [REWET](#), [RESTORE4Cs](#).