



ANNEX 2

to the COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION on the ENI East Regional Action Programme for 2019, Part 2, including some actions to be carried out in 2020, to be financed from the general budget of the European Union

Action Document for Support to the Implementation of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Dimension and the Implementation of the Northern Dimension and the Black Sea Synergy

MULTIANNUAL¹ PROGRAMME

This document constitutes the multiannual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation and action programme/measure in the sense of Articles 2 and 3 of Regulation N° 236/2014.

1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number	Support to the Implementation of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Dimension and the Implementation of the Northern Dimension and the Black Sea Synergy CRIS number: - ENI/2019/042-147 - ENI/2020/042-148 financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument	
2. Zone benefiting from the action/location	Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) and the Russian Federation The action shall be carried out at the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Partnership countries, • EU Member States, • Norway, Iceland, • Serbia, Turkey, • Russian Federation. 	
3. Programming document	ENI Regional East Strategy Paper (2014-2020) and Regional East Multiannual Indicative Programme (2017-2020)	
4. SDGs	Goal 3 (good health and well-being), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 10 (reduced inequalities), 13 (climate action), 14 (life below water), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), 17 (partnerships for the goals)	
5. Sector of intervention/ thematic area	Eastern Partnership Multilateral Dimension, Northern Dimension and Black Sea Synergy policy	DEV. Assistance: YES

¹ Within the maximum contribution of the European Union, the authorising officer responsible may adjust the allocation to the respective budget years subject to the availability of the commitment appropriations.

	frameworks			
6. Amounts concerned	<p>Total estimated cost: EUR 12 924 930</p> <p>Total amount of EU contribution EUR 12 550 000</p> <p>The contribution is for an amount of EUR 9 800 000 from the general budget of the European Union for financial year 2019 and for an amount of EUR 2 750 000 from the general budget of the European Union for financial year 2020, subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial years following the adoption of the relevant annual budget or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.</p>			
7. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	<p>Project Modality</p> <p>Direct management through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - grants – direct award - procurement of services <p>Indirect management with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - entrusted entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 5.3 			
8 a) DAC code(s)	43010 - Multi-sector aid			
b) Main Delivery Channel	41310 - UNDP 47110 - BSEC 21000 – International NGOs: EUNIC, NDPHS, NDI ²			
9. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)³	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x
	Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and Women's and Girl's Empowerment ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagships	N.A			

² <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/annex2.htm>.

³ When a marker is flagged as significant/principal objective, the action description should reflect an explicit intent to address the particular theme in the definition of objectives, results, activities and/or indicators (or of the performance / disbursement criteria, in the case of budget support).

⁴ Please check the Minimum Recommended Criteria for the Gender Marker and the Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker. If gender equality is not targeted, please provide explanation in section 4.5.Mainstreaming.

SUMMARY

The action supports the **implementation of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Dimension and the implementation of the Northern Dimension and the Black Sea Synergy**, as guided by the European Neighbourhood Policy. It entails a **flexible mechanism** giving the European Commission the possibility to financially underpin policy processes and dialogue as well as small-scale actions in line with the objectives of these policy frameworks.

The action will address the following areas:

1. Eastern Partnership (EaP) Multilateral Dimension

The main goal of the EaP Multilateral Dimension is to strengthen and complement the bilateral track of the Eastern Partnership and facilitate cooperation and dialogue with a view to achieving the targets set in the “20 deliverables for 2020” agenda. It is aimed at fostering relations between the EU and its Eastern partner countries as well as amongst the countries themselves. This action continues to provide a platform to sustain engagement with all partner countries, share best practice, ensure transparency, promote confidence building and advance each country's reform agenda.

2. Northern Dimension (ND)

The main objective of the ND common policy is to provide a framework for dialogue and concrete cooperation with a view to strengthening stability and confidence building and promoting economic integration, competitiveness and sustainable development in Northern Europe. This action provides continued financial support to policy processes and activities to promote this objective. Work under the ND supported by this action will focus on intensified engagement on people-to-people relations, health and cultural exchanges, cooperation on transport and logistics and decarbonisation of transport and trade routes, as well as follow up on environmental projects in the Baltic Sea catchment area and the Barents region.

3. Black Sea Synergy (BSS)

The main goal of the BSS is to foster regional dialogue and cooperation, to build confidence, and to achieve tangible results for the citizens, while providing practical, more sector-oriented support to the region, complementary to the EU's bilateral activities in the Black Sea. The framework offers a forum for tackling common challenges and sizing regional opportunities, with a view to the stability, sustainability, resilience and prosperity of the region. This action continues to financially support policy processes and activities promoting this goal. Support will focus on further facilitate concrete results in fisheries management, environmental monitoring and build legal and implementation capacity for partner countries' alignment with the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Further on, capacity building for the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation and its member states, in implementing the BSS objectives will be supported.

1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

1.1 Context Description, Policy Framework and Public Policy Analysis of the region

The EU's relations with its neighbours are guided by the **Global Strategy**⁵ and the revised **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**⁶. Both call to focus on achieving the overall goal of increasing the **stabilisation** and **resilience** of our neighbours.

⁵ Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy presented by the High Representative in June 2016.

⁶ The European Neighbourhood Policy was reviewed in November 2015.

The **Eastern Partnership (EaP)**⁷ was launched in 2009 at a Summit held in Prague, in an effort by the EU and its Eastern European partners to help promote political and economic reforms and assist the countries of the region move closer to the EU. At its basis lies a shared commitment to international law and fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to market economy, sustainable development and good governance. The **EaP Summits in Riga in 2015 and in Brussels in 2017** confirmed the consensus to step up actions in **four key priority areas**: economic development and market opportunities; strengthening institutions and good governance; connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change; and mobility and people-to-people contacts. Within this framework, all partners agreed to deliver tangible benefits to the daily lives of their citizens by focusing on achieving **20 Deliverables for 2020**.⁸

The main goal of the **Eastern Partnership (EaP) Multilateral Dimension** is to strengthen and complement the bilateral track of the Eastern Partnership and foster the relations between the EU and its six EaP partner countries as well as relations amongst the countries themselves. Within its revised architecture,⁹ this multilateral framework provides a platform to sustain engagement with all partner countries, share best practices, ensure transparency, promote confidence building and advance each country's reform agenda. The architecture involves the six partner countries, the EU Member States and EU institutions and is structured around four thematic platforms, in line with the four Riga priorities. Platforms are supported by sectoral panels as well as various workshops, seminars and meetings. The political steering is given by Senior Officials Meetings, as well as by ministerial meetings, feeding eventually into Summit Declarations.

To ensure the involvement of civil society in the Eastern Partnership, and in line with the Riga Summit Declaration and the 20 Deliverables for 2020 that underlines the need to engage on a deeper level with civil society, the **Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum** promotes contacts among civil society organisation and facilitates their dialogue with public authorities.

The **Northern Dimension** (ND) is a common policy between the EU, the Russian Federation, Norway and Iceland, in which Belarus cooperates in practical activities.¹⁰ Other actors such as International Financial Institutions, regional councils, universities and research centres also take part. Canada, the United States and Belarus are observers. It provides a framework to promote dialogue and concrete cooperation, strengthen stability and confidence building, and foster economic integration, competitiveness and sustainable development in Northern Europe. To facilitate project implementation, **four Partnerships** have been established to deal with the following priorities: environment (NDEP); public health and social well-being (NDPHS); transport and logistics (NDTL); and culture (NDPC). The **Northern Dimension Business Council**, a **Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum** as well as the **Northern Dimension Institute**, a research institution and university network, also form part of the ND institutional set up. Funding is based on the principle of co-financing. The focus of the project work of the partnerships is Russia, and to a lesser extent Belarus. Enhanced cooperation under the ND offers potential for expanding engagement with **Russia** in the current political context, both with a view to strengthening people-to-people contacts and cooperation in key areas of EU interest (for example climate, environment, public health).

A stable, secure, resilient and prosperous Black Sea region is in the direct interest of its citizens and of the EU overall. The **Black Sea Synergy**¹¹ has been the EU's key regional policy

⁷ The Eastern Partnership is a joint initiative involving the EU, its Member States and 6 eastern European partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

⁸ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31758/final-statement-st14821en17.pdf>.

⁹ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-4845_en.htm.

¹⁰ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/347/northern-dimension_en#Funding

¹¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0160:FIN:EN:PDF>

Countries of the Black Sea Synergy: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, the Republic of Moldova, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania and the Russian Federation

framework for the Black Sea region since 2007. It was formally launched at a meeting of the EU and Black Sea countries foreign ministers in 2008, in Kiev, and a joint statement was released¹². The main goal of this initiative is to foster regional dialogue and cooperation, to build confidence, and to achieve tangible results for the citizens, while providing practical, more sector-oriented support to the region, complementary to the EU's bilateral activities in the Black Sea. The framework offers a forum for tackling common challenges and sizing regional opportunities, with a view to the stability, sustainability, resilience and prosperity of the region. On 5 March 2019, the **third review of the Black Sea Synergy** was issued, covering period 2015-2018, highlighting important developments in the areas of maritime policy, marine research and innovation, fisheries, environmental protection and civil society engagement. The report (European Commission / EEAS Joint Staff Working Document) also reviews links with other EU strategies relevant for the Black Sea, as well as the cooperation with regional and international organisations active in the Black Sea.

The **Black Sea NGO Forum**, a civil society led initiative, supported by the Black Sea Synergy, brings together CSOs from each of the countries surrounding the Black Sea. The Romanian NGO FOND has been ensuring the secretariat of this platform since its set up in 2008. The Forum has a unique mandate to offer a platform of regional debate to CSOs surrounding the Black Sea on issues of common interest. It meets once a year to propose recommendations to policy makers on issues related to the status of civil society, issues such as citizen participation, youth, education and culture and discussing elements of implementing the Black Sea Synergy.

Synergies and complementarity with other ENI instruments notably the Cross-border Cooperation programme and the Neighbourhood Investment Facility as well as other funding envelopes available for cooperation within these policy frameworks instruments will be sought.

1.2 Stakeholder analysis

Main stakeholders are authorities and administrations of EU Member States and Eastern Partnership, Black Sea Synergy and Northern Dimension countries as well as civil society organisations involved in these three policy frameworks. End beneficiaries are citizens of the EaP, ND and BSS partner countries overall.

1.3 Problem analysis/priority areas for support

The Brussels summit endorsed the **20 Deliverables for 2020**. It also adopted the **revised EaP multilateral architecture**, which is operational since early 2018 and helps ensure effective and timely implementation of these targets in a strategic manner and with a differentiated approach to partners, recognising the different aspirations of each country. The **EaP Multilateral Dimension** provides the right platform to sustain engagement with all partner countries, share best practices, ensure transparency, promote confidence building and advance reforms.

Climate change, pollution, and increasing economic activity are placing growing pressure on the environment in the Northern regions. The **Northern Dimension**¹³ policy already plays a significant role in helping to improve wastewater treatment in cities, increase energy efficiency, and solid and hazardous waste management. Actions mitigating the legacy of operations of Soviet nuclear infrastructure are ongoing. The urgent need to address climate change in the region is an overarching objective. This should be advanced through the introduction of new technologies and monitoring methods, as well as the implementation of the EU's Arctic Communication, in particular tackling black carbon emissions in the European Arctic. An

¹² A joint statement was released: http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/blacksea/doc/joint_statement_blacksea_en.pdf

¹³ This action will fund the work of the partnerships in complementarity with funding from other sources: the ND Environment and Transport and Logistics dedicated support funds and other donors' contribution.

unexplored avenue of the Northern Dimension environmental partnership is regional dialogue on broad environmental issues, for example: legal regulations addressing black carbon emissions; the Circular Economy; promoting renewable energy sources as an economic resource for regional development; and other aspects of climate change awareness raising and mitigation. The **ND Environmental Partnership** and the Northern Dimension Institute (NDI) should be tasked to engage Russia and Belarus in such dialogue. Substantial funding for infrastructure projects with concrete benefits for citizens is available in the **NDEP Support Fund** supported by the EU.

The Regional Transport Network of the ND simplifies planning of infrastructure improvements on the most important routes in Northern Europe. The work under the **ND Partnership for Transport and Logistics** should also contribute to workshops and exchanges on decarbonising transportation, road safety, digitalisation of transport, new emerging trade routes and best practices on transport education in the region, also taking into account the Euro-Asian connectivity strategy. The partnership could also act as a platform for exchanges on the challenges of the Northern Sea Route. The NDI engages to facilitate some of these exchanges.

Social welfare and health care are important factors in economic stability and sustainable development. Priorities of the **ND Partnership on Health and Social Well-being** include *inter alia* the reduction of communicable diseases and infections; actions to address tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse; contributions to healthy aging, primary health care and occupational safety issues; as well as the implementation of strategies on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Advancing work in these fields in the region are in the EU's genuine interest, in particular in fields that have a cross-border impact, such as communicable diseases and AMR. The importance of this partnership for cooperation with Russia in the current political context should be underlined, both with a view to strengthening people-to-people contacts and cooperation in key areas of EU interest.

The **ND Partnership on Culture** as a tool for developing **people-to-people connections and cooperation** will be supported in this actions fostering cultural cooperation, improving operational conditions for cultural and creative industries, tourism, and youth exchanges, providing visibility for indigenous peoples' issues, and engaging in cross-border collaboration. It is important that the other regional cooperation formats recognise the importance and usefulness of the NDPC for their own work. Funding and networking assistance should be made available to the Secretariat of the partnership. The importance of this partnership for cooperation with Russia in the current political context should be underlined, with a view to strengthening people-to-people contacts and cooperation in key areas of EU interest.

In order to help stakeholders maintain dialogue and cooperation and improve the visibility of the ND in a wider geographic context, the **Northern Dimension Institute** (NDI) will be further supported in its efforts to facilitate exchanges and actively promote and publicise work taking place in the ND context.

The third review of the implementation of the **Black Sea Synergy**, through a **European Commission/EEAS Joint Staff Working Document**¹⁴ issued in March 2019, underlines that promoting cooperative and practical region-wide solutions is essential to address regional and global challenges. The review presents **three concentric circles** streamlining the various fields of cooperation. The design of these concentric circles is flexible and dynamic; topics could 'move' from one circle to another, based on the region's interest and progress made. The concentric circles are the following: The first circle includes the following areas of cooperation: **blue growth/economy**, with particular focus on the **integrated maritime policy, and marine research and innovation; fisheries; environmental protection and climate change; and civil society engagement**. The second circle includes: **education, science and innovation (beyond**

¹⁴ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/swd_2019_100_f1_joint_staff_working_paper_en_v3_p1_1013788-1.pdf

marine), culture and tourism, and energy and transport of different forms. In particular, the region has key potential for interconnectivity both within the EU and between continents, considering the **Black Sea bridging role**, as mentioned by the Europe-Asia Connectivity Strategy¹⁵. The third circle refers to the rest of the fields of cooperation under the Black Sea Synergy initiative, such as social affairs, employment or trade. Particularly on the first circle, supporting, including financially, the progress made so far is in EU's interest, consolidating EU's guiding and leading role in adopting two important regional agendas, developed under the Black Sea Synergy umbrella in the **blue growth area**, namely the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea. The implementation of these common agendas will produce impact and concrete results for the citizens and communities of the Black Sea, with important visibility for EU guiding role.

On the **environment protection** aspect, the environmental situation of the Black Sea is at high risk of degradation, without international cooperation. This remains a pressing issue for the region and achieving a 'good environmental status' of the Black Sea by 2020 is a key EU goal, taking into account also its impact on human health. The EMBLAS project has significantly contributed to an essential part of the MSFD implementation (assessment) and supplied unique and relevant data. At the same time, significant gaps still exist regarding a number of pressures to the marine and coastal environment, such as waste management in the region and regarding the decarbonisation of key economic sectors. The adaptation of critical infrastructure to climate change has not been sufficiently addressed. Building popular support and attracting private sector involvement is crucial.

Furthermore, the Black Sea faces serious challenges with respect to the conservation of **fishery resources**. The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) responsible for the sea is a key actor with a view to preserving fisheries resources in the area. The Black Sea is shared between three GFCM Members (Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey) and three non-Members (Georgia, Russian Federation, Ukraine) who are cooperating with the GFCM. The state of stocks in the area is at a critical level while levels of IUU (illegal, unreported and unregulated) fishing are considered to be extremely high. In addition, scientific advice remains a challenge while fisheries management instruments for non-EU riparian states need to be reformed and modernised to come up to international legal and technical developments.

Enhancing multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea on **fisheries governance** is a pillar for advancements on fisheries management and control towards the sustainability of fisheries. Both the 2016 Bucharest Declaration and the 2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration made multilateral cooperation a core objective. The GFCM is a key actor, as regional management fisheries organisation for the Mediterranean and the Black Seas, which promotes joint management for shared stocks, ownership over joint action and creates a culture of compliance much needed to fight the endemic high level of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IUU). The BlackSea4Fish project under the GFCM supports the effective collaboration between academia and research institutes on marine fisheries in the Black Sea.

On every appropriate occasion the EU officially expresses through technical and diplomatic dialogue its high interest to become a Party to the *Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution* (**Bucharest Convention**) and to its body – the Black Sea Commission. The 7th EU Environmental Action Programme¹⁶ sets the EU's obligation to engage for the accession to the Black Sea Commission¹⁷. Membership to the Bucharest Convention would bring the institutional status of the EU in line with its substantial contribution to the protection of the

¹⁵https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_communication_-_connecting_europe_and_asia_-_building_blocks_for_an_eu_strategy_2018-09-19.pdf

¹⁶ The 2013 Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council

¹⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/action-programme/>

Black Sea marine and costal environment, while providing grounds for further support to the environmental protection activities of this marine region

Development of existing networks of **civil society** in the BS region was supported in the last action document through the support to FOND, and continues, also from different funding addressed to the EaP Civil Society Forum.

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risks	Risk level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
<p>For objective 1, 2, 3: Partner countries' political reform will slow down, governments lose interest in EaP/ND/BSS cooperation.</p> <p>For objectives 2 and 3: Relations with Russia remain tense or deteriorate further.</p>	<p>M - L, depending on partner country</p> <p>M - H</p>	<p>O 1: Ensure relevant, inclusive cooperation that produces tangible results for citizens and governments</p> <p>O 2: Under both policy frameworks, confidence building measures and people to people focussed initiatives will continue to be supported.</p> <p>For the ND, this implies in practice intensifying cooperation in the fields of people-to-people relations (e.g. public health, culture, policy-relevant research, exchanges on environmental and transport-related issues) and continuing to abide by the limits imposed by the restrictive measures on projects in Russia funded through the NDEP and NDPTL support funds. New projects in Russia that are in the EU's interest may be approved on a case-by-case basis, particularly in the environmental partnership, such as the recently launched black carbon projects. Projects in Belarus continue to pose practical challenges, but no restrictive measures apply to Belarus.</p> <p>For the BSS, the particular challenges and risks for the regional cooperation include the geopolitical landscape of the Black Sea area, with its complex web of diverse and often conflicting interests, aspirations, interactions and identities; the volatile security situation and destabilisation actions in the region; the illegal annexation of Crimea and other violation of international law; the restrictive measures; the evolving security situation in the nearby Sea of Azov. Nevertheless, at intervention-level this has not filtered into deteriorated working-relations at the technical and people-to-people levels, in particular when neutral platforms of implementation are used and the focus is on concrete and sector-oriented developments.</p> <p>Other particular challenges relate to the political will and the level of commitment of the partners to engage in regional cooperation programmes; the difficulties of and limited capacity for managing,</p>

		developing and implementing projects and accessing financial opportunities; the complexity of EU rules and procedures. The impact of global issues, such as terrorism, migration or climate change should be also to be considered.
Assumptions		
Objective 1: The main assumptions are that the political situation continues to allow for the planned activities to be implemented and does not deteriorate, national government partners remain committed and support project implementation, and trust is built among stakeholders.		
Objectives 2 and 3: The situation of EU-Russia relations will be kept under review. It has an impact on the cooperation under the Northern Dimension and the Black Sea Synergy , which needs to follow closely the five guiding principles underlying EU relations with Russia, as laid out by HR/VP in 2016.		

3 LESSONS LEARNT AND COMPLEMENTARITY

3.1 Lessons learnt

Since its creation, the **Eastern Partnership** has proven to be a key policy initiative to foster policy dialogue and share experience among partner countries, EU Member States and the relevant EU institutions. The EaP Summit in Riga in 2015 and in Brussels in 2017 have given the process new impetus. A focus on key sectoral priorities, with implementation targets spelled out in the “20 Deliverables for 2020”, as well as the revised architecture, have facilitated cooperation and produce concrete results for EaP and EU citizens. The participation of civil society and international financial institutions has further contributed to cooperation among interested parties.

The support function to the **EaP Multilateral Dimension**, partially funded under this action but mainly through a specific CSO project, continued through this action fully responds to the need to organise and fund EaP events at all levels of the institutional set up and thus to sustain meaningful and effective engagement with all partner countries, share best practices, promote confidence building, design joint actions and have a real impact on reforms.

The engagement of civil society in EaP dialogue continues to be crucial, to ensure that their expertise can be taken into account and that the voice of society in both the EU and Eastern Partnership countries is heard. The participation of civil society in platforms and panels and the creation of the **EaP Civil Society Forum** working groups mirroring the work of the platforms show the importance that civil society attaches to their participation in the EaP process.

The results achieved so far by the various **Northern Dimension** Partnerships, which have positively contributed both to strengthening policy dialogue and to implementing concrete activities, show the importance of continued assistance to dialogue processes and project funding. Many of the ND projects also have positive regional and cross-border impacts in **EU Member States**, as well as **Iceland** and **Norway**. In this context it is worth mentioning that the **Environmental Partnership** policy has served as a model for other multi-donor partnerships and initiatives through its landmark achievements in nuclear safety, wastewater, energy efficiency and now black carbon work. The considerable success of the partnership in leveraging funds (by up to a factor of twenty) inspired the setting up of the Partnership for Transport and Logistics Support Fund, even though new concrete actions have been limited due to the restrictive measures on the Russian Federation resulting from the annexation of Crimea. The difficulties encountered in establishing and stabilising the work of the **Partnership on Transport and Logistics** is indicative of the long time-frames and the need for continued and renewed commitment inherent to regional cooperation in this sector. Maintaining its structures

and redirecting its efforts in the present circumstances also underscores the added value of having established such a partnership at a time of relative stability in EU-Russia relations. The continued work and results achieved particularly in the **Health and Social Wellbeing Partnership** has proven the resilience of people-to-people cooperation in these fields, even with moderate EU funding. The **Culture Partnership** has also achieved good results, and with increased support it is in a position to have a significantly larger positive impact. For its part, the **Northern Dimension Institute's** funding history has shown that a multiannual funding commitment would be desirable to ensure continuity of its activities. Evaluations = of the NDPL, NDPHS and NDPC are ongoing with a view to stocktaking and future orientations beyond 2020.

Results seen during 2015-2018 confirm the utility of the **Black Sea Synergy**, its positive contribution to regional cooperation and point to its yet untapped potential. Through this initiative, the EU has continued to play a constructive role and share responsibility in the Black Sea area, building its potential, for the resilient and prosperous development of the region and its citizens. Further coordination in policies and legislation between the Black Sea countries has proven to be a common interest to both the EU and the partner countries. Cooperation under the BSS has enabled Black Sea riparian countries plus the Republic of Moldova to set a **Strategic research and innovation agenda** and a **Common maritime agenda** for the Black Sea. With EU support, progress was achieved by the Black Sea countries, in areas related to blue growth, maritime policy, marine research and innovation, fisheries, and environmental monitoring and protection. Also support to public awareness and participation is provided. Other areas of cooperation (education, culture and tourism; or energy and transport, social affairs and employment), albeit less developed, receive growing interest. The BSS thus constitutes an important means towards regional resilience. Another example of success is the ongoing harmonisation of cooperation activities aimed at building the regional infrastructure for marine environmental monitoring in line with the **Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)** principles.¹⁸ Finally, the **Black Sea Cross-border cooperation programme** has been supporting a constantly growing number of projects, technical assistance needs and management costs for municipalities and small-scale stakeholders in areas such as environment, SME-development, tourism, research and innovation. Nonetheless, the EU should support a more structured engagement with regional and international organisations active in the Black Sea such as the **Black Sea Economic Cooperation**, as well as the **GFCM** as the exclusive fisheries organisation in the area to drive the new governance towards sustainable Black Sea fisheries for the benefit of the riparian countries, including the EU.

Support to civil society in this region, in particular through the pragmatic development of the **Black Sea NGO Forum**, remains essential. Since its creation in 2008, dialogue and concrete work have been intensifying under this format. With a grant received under Regional Action Programme 2017, FOND is gradually enhancing its role as facilitator of CSO networks and cooperation.

Experience of supporting the **EaP Multilateral Dimension, the ND and the BSS** has shown so far that maintaining a certain level of flexibility as regards the original planning of activities is essential to take account of developments that may take place in the work programmes of the Eastern Partnership platforms throughout the year.

3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

This action complements EU support and cooperation under the **bilateral and regional Annual Action Programmes** for the Eastern Partnership countries. It also complements the activities under the **Global Allocation**.

¹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/eu-coast-and-marine-policy/marine-strategy-framework-directive/index_en.htm.

The main goal of the **Eastern Partnership (EaP) Multilateral Dimension** is to strengthen and complement the **bilateral track** of the Eastern Partnership and foster the relations between the EU and its EaP partner countries as well as relations amongst the countries themselves. It entails by its own nature close coordination with EU Member States and partner countries in the framework of the platforms and related panels. Other donors/entities are also represented in these fora (e.g. European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, Economic and Social Committee, Council of Europe).

Activities implemented in the framework of the **Northern Dimension** are complemented by actions carried out under the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (**EUSBSR**), which is an EU policy aiming to save the Baltic Sea, connect the region and increase prosperity of the Member States' regions involved. Cooperation also intersects with the regional development strategies of the other countries and actors in the region. The multilateral nature of the ND brings together not only the EU Member States but also the **Russian Federation, Norway and Iceland. EU Members States individually, the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Nordic Council of Ministers** all participate in this policy. **International Financial Institutions** such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO) provide funding for activities. Continuing work on maximising synergies and minimising overlap is necessary. Further systematising this work in relation to the regional councils should be considered.

In the **Black Sea** basin, EU Member States activities to implement the Marine Strategy Framework Directive have been complemented by the EU-UNDP project "Improving Environmental Monitoring in the Black Sea" (**EMBLAS**). This responded to the objective of harmonisation of environmental monitoring and protection policies. Further development of links between the Black Sea Synergy and the Danube Strategy could be envisaged. Main actions in the field of **fisheries governance** will continue to be implemented by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries as well as through ongoing in ENI funded actions, as fisheries remains an important policy area of dialogue under the BSS. Coordination with the **GFCM** remains relevant in particular for prioritising capacity building and technical assistance and ensuring complimentary on actions covering the fight against IUU fishing, Monitoring, Control and surveillance (MCS) and scientific projects on data collection and scientific advice. On **maritime affairs** coordination with regional organisations such the **Black Sea Commission and Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation** remains relevant in particular for disseminating information to relevant experts and raising awareness about the added value of collective action. The EU is supporting the **German Marshall Fund's Black Sea Trust** for regional cooperation with a view to increase regional and sub-regional cooperation between civil society organisations in the Black Sea region in the field of civic participation and democratic control of public authorities.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 Overall objective, specific objective(s), expected outputs and indicative activities

In line with the European Neighbourhood Policy, the **overall of objective** of cooperation of this action is to strengthen prosperity, stability, security, and good neighbourliness in the regions covered by this action.

The **specific objective** of the **EaP Multilateral Dimension** (Objective 1) is to provide a forum for cooperation activities, support on legislative and regulatory approximation with the EU, and information and experience sharing on partner countries' steps towards reforms, with a focus on implementing the "20 deliverables for 2020".

The **specific objective** of the **Northern Dimension** (Objective 2) policy is to promote cooperation and dialogue to achieved concrete results in the areas of environmental and climate protection, connectivity, public health, culture and people-to-people contacts in Northern Europe.

Due to the differing character of the three components and their activities, no coherent set of outcomes can be presented here.

The **specific objective** of the **Black Sea Synergy** (Objective 3) is to encourage dialogue and practical regional cooperation between the countries surrounding the Black Sea with a focus on **maritime policy and affairs with blue growth/economy at its centre, environment, fisheries, tourism, interconnections, research and innovation, civil society engagement, and cross border cooperation.**

The individual components of this action will directly address the specific objectives formulated under the three policy frameworks and support the related policy processes and cooperation activities.

The **EaP Multilateral Dimension** indicative planning foresees events in the following formats:

The **following meetings** can be expected per year (indicative figures):

- 3 Ministerial level meetings,
- 8 Platform meetings,
- 24 Panel meetings,
- 30 Seminars and meetings in the framework of panels,
- Civil Society Forum: 1 Annual Assembly, 4 Steering Committee meetings, 5 Working Groups meetings (all partially funding from this action and partially from a Civil Society Forum support contract).

In addition, this support will cover the organisation costs of **ad hoc meetings** and events crucial for the implementation of the 20 Deliverables for 2020. These could include, inter alia, events organised by the EU Presidency, by think tanks and by CSO's as well as facilitating the participation of EaP stakeholders in other key meetings and events selected by the European Commission.

Other activities may be carried out in order to support the implementation of the Eastern Partnership priorities and deliverables and enhance "EU4..." initiatives.

Under the **Northern Dimension**, indicative planning includes the following components:

Within the **ND Partnership for Health and Social Wellbeing**, an action will aim at strengthening cooperation with a view to enhancing health and social wellbeing, as well as people to people relations in the region.

Areas of work envisaged: occupational safety and health, non-communicable and communicable diseases (including HIV/TB), primary healthcare, prison health, healthy aging, antimicrobial resistance, anti-tobacco campaign, alcohol and substance abuse.

Key activities supported may include: capacity development and institutional strengthening of the partnership and its secretariat, supporting the work of the successful network of experts, organisation of workshops and seminars, research and analysis, sub-granting, and awareness raising and visibility actions. Furthermore, the role of the NDPHS as priority area coordinator of policy/sector related analysis within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and cooperation with the EU HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis and Tuberculosis Civil Society Forum will be strengthened.

Within the **ND Partnership for Culture**, support will help strengthen cooperation with a view to enhancing cultural and creative industries exchanges and associated people-to-people relations.

Areas of work envisaged: creative culture industries including culture-based services and innovation, tourism, protection and development of Euro-Arctic indigenous peoples' cultures, digitalisation in culture, cross-sectoral collaboration, cross-cultural and cross-regional understanding and youth issues.

Key activities supported may include: capacity development and institutional strengthening of the partnership and its secretariat, exchanges of practitioners and cultural operators, networking, workshops and seminars, policy/sector related analysis, sub-granting and research, and awareness raising and visibility actions. In addition joint projects will be organised, such as road shows, cultural events and exhibitions, the annual St. Petersburg cultural forum, and synergies with and participation in e.g. the EU Film festivals and European Day of Languages and cultural activities of other regional actors, such as the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Council of the Baltic Sea States, including youth exchanges are envisaged.

Support to the **Northern Dimension Institute** will further enhance its capacity and activities as facilitator of exchanges and cooperation.

Key activities supported will include: the identification/creation of synergies between themes of ND partnerships and other regional strategies and initiatives, fostering of cross-partnership cooperation, strategy formulation, policy-relevant research, workshops, seminars and expert exchanges (notably for NDPTL and NDEP), and improving the visibility and outreach of the ND policy in a wider geographical context.

Under the **Black Sea Synergy**, indicative planning includes the following components:

Support will aim at further facilitating technical cooperation on **environmental monitoring** as well as enabling Georgia and Ukraine to establish modern systems and facilities in support of environmental monitoring. Work will enhance the achievements of previous EMBLAS phases and further support the alignment with and implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and relevant aspects of the Water Framework Directive.

Areas of work will continue to address technical capacity building for monitoring, modernisation of monitoring facilities, and further ensure public awareness and actions on the ground.

Key activities supported will include further refinement of monitoring techniques, data collection and analysis, procurement of laboratory equipment, training of experts, public awareness and communication and visibility more generally. Close interaction with the Joint Research Centre and the European Environment Agency will continue, including in order to input **relevant data in EU databases**.

Support to the **Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)** will strengthen project implementation capacity of BSEC and its role as facilitator of dialogue and cooperation in the region, while implementing the Black Sea Synergy elements, following the EU approach as regards the non-recognition of illegal annexation Crimea, and avoiding any actions, including blending with other BSEC funds, that could affect this position.

Areas of work will address tourism, energy and maritime small-scale transport.

In order to accompany processes and political dialogue in a flexible manner, the ND and BSS components will also receive funding under the standard **events contract** implementing the EaP multilateral dimension,

Financial support to the EaP Civil Society Forum from different funding and support to FOND from a previous year will allow enhanced engagement of **civil society** in EaP and Black Sea area

4.2 Intervention Logic

This action will contribute to the smooth implementation of cooperation, dialogue and targeted actions under the three policy frameworks described above. Through the planned components, it will thus help strengthen prosperity, stability, security, and good neighbourliness in the regions covered by this action and foster the relations between the EU and its partner countries as well as relations amongst the countries themselves.

More concretely:

The **EaP multilateral dimension** will complement the bilateral track of the Eastern Partnership and foster the relations between the EU and its six EaP partner countries as well as relations amongst the countries themselves. Within its revised architecture, this multilateral framework provides a platform to sustain engagement with all partner countries, share best practices, ensure transparency, promote confidence building and advance each country's reform agenda in line with the four Riga priorities and the 20 Deliverables for 2020.

Cooperation under the **Northern Dimension** allows for dialogue and concrete cooperation, helps strengthen stability and confidence building, and fosters economic integration, competitiveness and sustainable development in Northern Europe. This will create further benefits for the environment, the public health situation, transport connections, cultural exchange and thus for the citizens in the ND region.

Cooperation under **Black Sea Synergy** contributes to a more stable, secure, resilient and prosperous Black Sea region. By encouraging cooperation between the countries surrounding the Black Sea, the framework offers a forum for tackling common problems while encouraging political and economic reform it creates concrete benefits the citizens in the BSS region.

4.3 Mainstreaming

Under the **EaP multilateral dimension**, which consists almost exclusively of events, gender equality of participation in events will be taken into account where appropriate and feasible. Human rights, gender equality and environmental issues will regularly be topics discussed at EaP events including during higher level policy dialogue. Intercultural dialogue and conflict sensitivity are key features of this component.

The EU has committed to dedicate at least 20% of the overall EU budget to climate-relevant action. Environmental protection will be one of the major topics of cooperation and dialogue both under the ND and the BSS frameworks. Gender equality in participation in projects and event will be taken into account where appropriate and feasible. Intercultural dialogue and conflict sensitivity are key features of all three component.

4.4 Contribution to SDGs

This intervention is relevant for the 2030 Agenda. It contributes primarily to the progressive achievement of SDGs: Goal 3 (good health and well-being), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 10 (reduced inequalities), 13 (climate action), 14 (life below water), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), 17 (partnerships for the goals).

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner countries of the Eastern Partnership, the Northern Dimension and the Black Sea Synergy.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of the adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

5.3 Implementation modalities for an action under project modality

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures¹⁹.

5.3.1 Grant: (*direct management*) Direct award to the Northern Dimension Institute (NDI) - Objective 2

(a) Purpose of the grant

The Northern Dimension Institute is a key stakeholder in the ND policy framework, both as a facilitator of work and dialogue as well as a means to maintain some neutral cooperation structures with the Russian Federation. The Institute is instrumental in capacity building on topics of common interest in the ND area and maintaining dialogue with the ND partnerships and actors through science diplomacy and people-to-people contacts. It provides evidence-based policy-making in the ND area and strengthens academic and civil society communities. The ND Senior officials meeting of 5 March 2019 called on the continuation of this work. The award of this grant would strengthen the capacity of the NDI to implement actions such as: the identification/creation of synergies between themes of ND partnerships and other regional strategies and initiatives; cross-partnership cooperation; partnership's strategy formulation; partnerships' targeted research support, strengthening of ND policy visibility and outreach in the wider geographical context.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

The academic and scientific institute for the Northern Dimension was established in 2009, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland provided funding from 2009 until end 2015. Since its establishment, the NDI has gained a role as knowledge provider and awareness raising partner for the four ND Partnerships and proven its ability to contribute to the strategic development of the ND Partnerships.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because, as provided for in Article 195(1) (f) of the Financial Regulation, the action requires a **particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation.**

¹⁹ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

5.3.2 Grant: (*direct management*) Direct Award to the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) - Objective 2

(a) Purpose of the grant

The European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) will assume a key role in facilitating dialogue and cooperation under the ND Partnership through this grant and help reach the objectives the partnership has set itself in areas such as creative cultural industries, including culture-based services and innovation, tourism, networking, cultural cross-sectoral collaboration, indigenous entrepreneurship, digitalisation in culture and youth exchanges. This component will strengthen one of the neutral cooperative structures remaining with Russia.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

The European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) is the umbrella association of national cultural institutes from almost all EU Member States. At a local level, EUNIC members join together in over 100 clusters - in cities, regions, and countries - to collaborate on common projects and programmes. By pooling together resources and expertise of its members and carrying out joint work, the EUNIC is a recognised and unique partner of the EU in promoting the role of culture in the EU's internal and external relations.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because as provided for in Article 195(1) (f) of the Financial Regulation, the action requires a **particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation.**

5.3.3 Grant: (*direct management*) Direct award to the Northern Partnership for Public Health and Social Wellbeing (NDPHS) - Objective 2

(a) Purpose of the grant

The grant will help reach the objectives this ND partnership has set itself in areas such as: policy/sector related analysis, capacity development and institutional strengthening with a view to strengthening cooperation under this partnership. Areas of work will address areas such as: healthy aging, occupational safety and health, communicable and non-communicable diseases, anti-tobacco campaign, primary healthcare, prison health, alcohol and substance abuse, and antimicrobial resistance. This component will strengthen one of the neutral cooperative structures remaining with Russia.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

The ND Partnership for Public Health and Social Wellbeing is a cooperative effort of ten governments, the European Commission and eight international organisations. It provides a regional forum for concerted action to tackle challenges to health and social well-being in the Northern Dimension area. Through this grant it will be strengthened in its key role to in facilitating dialogue and cooperation under the Partnership.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because as provided for in Article 195(1) (f) of the Financial Regulation, the action requires a **particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation.**

If negotiations with the above-mentioned entity fail, that part of this action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section 5.3.5.

5.3.4 Grant: (direct management) Direct award to the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) - Objective 3

(a) Purpose of the grant

With this direct grant, BSEC will be strengthened in its project implementation capacity and its role as facilitator of dialogue and cooperation in the identified sectors, based on its ability to bring all Black Sea countries together around common objectives in the common interest of the EU and all BSEC partners.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

BSEC is the oldest (established in 1992) and most representative regional organisation promoting economic cooperation in the wider Black Sea area with 12 Member States (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine). The EU has had a permanent observer status in BSEC since 2007. BSEC aims at fostering interaction and harmony among its members, encouraging friendly and good-neighbourly relations in the Black Sea region. BSEC serves as a vehicle for cooperation in a wide range of areas for its Member States and beyond, contributes to the overall development and growth in the region and serves as a valuable, confidence-building mechanism.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because as provided for in Article 195(1) (f) of the Financial Regulation, the action requires a **particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation.**

5.3.5 Procurement (direct management) - Objective 1

Under the **EaP multilateral dimension**, a service contract will provide a flexible mechanism giving the European Commission the possibility to finance policy processes and dialogue as well as small-scale actions in line with the objectives of this framework.

Subject	Services	Indicative number of contracts	Indicative timing of launch of the procedure
Implementation of the Eastern Partnership multilateral dimension	Services	2	1st quarter of 2020 1st quarter of 2021

5.3.6 Indirect management with an entrusted entity – United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Objective 3

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with UNDP. The implementation by this entity under the BSS entails technical assistance and procurement of equipment related to environmental protection and marine environmental monitoring with a focus on Georgia and Ukraine. This implementation is justified given that UNDP has implemented three phases of the "Environmental Monitoring in the Black Sea" (EMBLAS) programme on behalf of the EU, and the current action will constitute a follow up. The entrusted entity possesses specialised technical expertise and is well placed not

only to provide technical advice but also to procure laboratory equipment, including because of tax exemptions enjoyed in the two target countries.

If negotiations with the above-mentioned entity fail, that part of this action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in sections 5.3.1 / 5.3.2 / 5.3.3 or 5.3.5.

5.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

5.5 Indicative budget

Budget 2019: 9 800 000 Budget 2020: 2 750 000	EU contribution (in EUR)	Third party contribution (in EUR)
Support to the implementation of the <u>multilateral dimension of the EaP</u>		
5.3.5 – EaP MD - Procurement (direct management) (Objective 1) - 2019 budget	6 150 000	N.A.
Support to the support to the implementation of the <u>Black Sea Synergy and the Northern Dimension</u>		
5.3.1 – ND - Direct grant to NDI (Objective 2) - 2020 budget	600 000	66 667
5.3.2 – ND - Direct grant to EUNIC (Objective 2) - 2019 budget	1 400 000	76 684
5.3.3 – ND - Direct grant to NDPHS (Objective 2) - 2019 budget - 2020 budget	1 850 000 150 000	97 368 7 895
5.3.4 – BSS - Direct grant to BSEC (Objective 3) - 2019 budget	400 000	21 053
5.3.6 – BSS - UNDP DA (Objective 3) – 2020 budget	2 000 000	105 263
Totals	EUR 12 550 000	EUR 374 930

5.6 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

Each component has its organisational set up with related responsibilities.

The Eastern Partnership Multilateral Dimension will be implemented through a service contract with its respective organisational arrangements and responsibilities, mainly serving the smooth organisation and implementation of events under the EaP architecture.

The set-up of the components related to the Northern Dimension and the Black Sea Synergy are closely linked to institutional arrangements under these political frameworks and the respective service and grant contracts and delegation agreements through which the components are implemented.

5.7 Performance and Results monitoring and reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partners' responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partners / contractors of the respective implementing modalities shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports as foreseen in the respective contracts. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the Logframe matrix.

SDGs indicators and, if applicable, and any jointly agreed indicators should be taken into account.

The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Where resources are benefiting specific undertakings carrying out economic activities and those resources are granted through the budget of the State or the State contributes to the selection of the specific interventions to be supported, applicable State aid rules should be complied with.

5.8 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, evaluation(s) will not be carried out for this action or its components.

The Commission may, during implementation within the Northern Dimension or under the Black Sea Synergy, decide to undertake a mid-term or final evaluation, for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders. The implementing partners and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partners, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of any evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

5.9 Audit

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

Where relevant, the provisions of the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) between the European Union and the United Nations of 29 April 2003 and its addendum No1 of 26 February 2014 shall apply.

The financing of the audit shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

5.10 Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

Actions under the three components shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be elaborated under the individual component and closely linked to such measures foreseen under the three relevant political frameworks (EaP, ND, BSS).

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner countries, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Requirements for European Union External Action (or any succeeding document) shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

All EU-supported actions shall be aimed at increasing the awareness level of the target audiences on the connections, the outcome, and the final practical benefits for citizens of EU assistance provided in the framework of this action.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the action has received funding from the EU in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions. Additional Visibility Guidelines developed by the Commission (European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations) will be strictly adhered to.

It is the responsibility of the implementing organisation to keep the EU Delegations and, where relevant, DG NEAR and EEAS, fully informed of the planning and implementation of the appropriate milestones specific visibility and communication activities.

The implementing organisation shall report on its visibility and communication actions, as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.

This action will be communicated externally as part of a wider context of EU support to the country, and where relevant to the Eastern Partnership region in order to enhance the effectiveness of communication activities and to reduce fragmentation in the area of EU communication.

LOGFRAME:

Action Document for the Implementation of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Dimension and the Implementation of the Black Sea Synergy and the Northern Dimension

<p>Specific objective 1: Provide a forum for cooperation, information and experience sharing on partner countries' steps towards reforms, with a focus on implementing the "20 deliverables for 2020"</p>		
<u>Expected Results</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
Enhanced cooperation between the EU, the EU MSs and the EaP partner countries and the countries of other regional fora through multilateral cooperation	Number of events financed Number of participants Number of policy documents produced	Minutes of meetings Ministerial declarations Activity reports Conducted studies
<p>Specific objective 2: Encourage dialogue and practical regional cooperation between the ND countries to achieved concrete results in the areas of environmental and climate protection, connectivity, public health, culture and people-to-people contacts in Northern Europe</p>		
<u>Expected Results</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
Improved cooperation of ND countries on environmental protection, public health and social well being, culture and people-to-people contacts. Stronger links to other EU external policies and strategies. Enhanced capacity of the ND Partnerships to tackle issues of common interest Improved environmental situation in the Baltic Sea region, improved water quality	NDEP: Helcom indicators (such as, nitrogen and phosphorus discharges in the wastewaters). NDPHS + NDPC: Indicators to be designed for specific actions	HELCOM and local beneficiary entities monitoring Project/activity reports Minutes of meetings Conducted studies
<p>Specific objective 3: Encourage dialogue and practical regional cooperation between the BSS countries with a focus on maritime policy and affairs with blue growth/economy at its centre, environment, fisheries, tourism, interconnections, research and innovation, civil society, and cross border cooperation</p>		
<u>Expected Results</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
Increased ownership by Black Sea riparian countries/authorities of BSS projects umbrella, with stronger links to other EU external policies and strategies Increased functional cooperation in key sectors between the BS countries facilitated by BSEC Improved environmental situation in the Black Sea region Improve cooperation of BS countries in fisheries areas, facilitated by GFCM Improved transport links between TEN-T network and the network developed by the NDPTL Improved transport and tourism opportunities in the Black Sea region	Number of joint projects launched by the BSEC structures Number of parameters that Georgia and Ukraine will be able to measure independently at high quality Indicators to be designed for specific actions. Further indicators to be designed for specific actions.	Project/activity reports Minutes of meetings Conducted studies

