



FUTURELAKES

For Nature, Climate and People

Call for Associated Regions: Guidelines for Applicants

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Summary

FutureLakes aims to demonstrate innovative solutions needed to transform lake restoration across Europe. These solutions aim to significantly improve ecological and chemical status of European lakes, reduce nutrient pollution, restore biodiversity, recover valuable resources, enhance the services that lakes provide and make society more resilient to climate change. Solutions being tested include nature-based solutions in lake catchments to reduce nutrient pollution, circular economy solutions to recover phosphorus and other valuable resources from lake sediments, or from harvested algal biomass, and solutions focused on habitat creation for biodiversity.

The FutureLakes Open Call aims to fund three Associated Regions to engage and work alongside the FutureLakes consortium. The aim of this is to showcase the feasibility and replicability of restoration solutions developed within the FutureLakes project in other areas of the EU, or eligible associated countries. Specifically, Associated Regions selected in this call will engage with activities in FutureLakes and be provided with significant technical assistance to prepare an action plan for at least one large lake in their region, using the outcomes and knowledge of FutureLakes, and an Upscaling Roadmap which outlines what restoration measures will be replicated or scaled-up to restore one or more lakes in their region.

Table of contents

Summary	2
1 Introduction	4
1.1 About the FutureLakes project	4
2 General information	5
2.1 Terms and conditions.....	5
2.2 Means of submission	5
2.3 Language	5
2.4 Data protection	5
3 Eligibility criteria	6
3.1 Applicants' eligibility	6
3.2 Eligible countries.....	6
3.3 Financial conditions	7
3.4 Eligible activities.....	8
3.5 Other conditions	8
4 Open Call submission, selection and negotiation process	9
4.1 Proposal preparation and submission	9
4.2 Documentation	10
4.3 Proposal preparation and submission	10
5 Proposal evaluation and selection	10
5.1 STEP 1. Eligibility verification	11
5.2 STEP 2. Proposal evaluation.....	11
5.3 Ranking of proposals and selection	13
5.4 Use of qualified Electronic Signatures (QES).....	13
6 Specifications of AR projects in FutureLakes	14
6.1 Project Implementation	14
6.2 Reporting and additional requirements	15
7 Responsibilities of the beneficiaries	16
7.1 Conflict of interest	16

7.2	Checks and reviews.....	16
7.3	Promoting the action and giving visibility to the EU funding	16
8	Confidentiality and data protection	16
8.1	Application stage.....	16
8.2	Evaluation stage.....	16
9	Contact information	17
10	Acknowledgements & Disclaimer	17

1 Introduction

This document provides relevant information regarding the Open Call of the FutureLakes project. The FutureLakes Open Call aims to fund three Associated Regions to engage and work alongside the FutureLakes consortium to showcase the feasibility and replicability of restoration solutions developed within the FutureLakes project in other areas of the EU, or eligible associated countries. Specifically, Associated Regions selected in this call will engage with activities in FutureLakes and be provided with significant technical assistance to prepare an action plan for at least one large lake in their region, using the outcomes and knowledge of FutureLakes. In addition, an Upscaling Roadmap will outline the restoration measures to be replicated or scaled-up, to restore one or more lakes in their region, and plans for implementing these. It is expected that these plans will be co-developed with stakeholders in the Associated Region and country. The goals of the action plan and roadmap are to improve the ecological and chemical status of their lake, provide greater protection and restoration of biodiversity and support innovation-based growth and job creation in their region.

1.1 About the FutureLakes project

FutureLakes aims to demonstrate innovative solutions needed to transform lake restoration across Europe. These solutions aim to significantly improve ecological and chemical status of European lakes, reduce nutrient pollution, restore biodiversity, recover valuable resources, enhance the services that lakes provide and make society more resilient to climate change. Demonstrated solutions include nature-based solutions in lake catchments to reduce nutrient pollution, circular economy solutions to recover phosphorus and other valuable resources from lake sediments or from harvested algal biomass, and solutions focused on habitat creation for biodiversity.

A key project deliverable is a Blueprint for lake protection and restoration. This will include a catalogue of technical solutions, a comprehensive evaluation of 10 innovative solutions, guidance on establishing more effective and inclusive water governance and showcasing integration of innovations in public engagement, policy and green financing in 6 demonstration basins.

The FutureLakes project began on 1st October 2024 and will run for three years until 30th September 2027.

2 General information

2.1 Terms and conditions

This section describes the relevant terms that are used in the Open Call documentation. Unless otherwise stated, the definition of a term is the one stated in this section.

Associated Region (AR) – regions with another natural lake located in EU Member States and/or Horizon Europe’s Associated countries.

Local and regional authorities - FutureLakes defines local and regional authorities as **governmental or administrative bodies that operate at the local (municipal or city) or regional (state, provincial, or district) levels**. These authorities are responsible for **managing, regulating, or overseeing water resources, including lakes and their catchments**, within their respective jurisdictions (e.g. local water departments and agencies, municipalities, environmental protection agencies etc.). Several local and regional authorities can act together and apply as a consortium, but one authority must act as the Lead applicant and is responsible for delivering the project and distributing funds amongst the consortium.

2.2 Means of submission

The FutureLakes webpage (<https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>) includes downloads for the necessary application forms. **The final application should be sent by e-mail to futurelakes@niva.no by 31.03.2025, 17:00 CET**. Any proposal submitted through other channels will be rejected. Any additional Annex documentation that is requested in the application form should be submitted by email alongside the application form.

2.3 Language

English is the official language for the FutureLakes Open Call. Submissions written in any language other than English will not be eligible or evaluated. English is the only official language during the whole implementation of the FutureLakes programme. This means that any requested submission of documentation and deliverables must be done in English to be eligible

2.4 Data protection

To process and evaluate applications, FutureLakes will need to collect personal and industrial data. The FutureLakes consortium ensures that data are collected, processed and published in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR)¹. It should be noted that FutureLakes requests the minimum information needed to deliver the evaluation procedures or the implementation of the funding programme. The ‘Annex 5: Bank account information Form’ and ‘Annex 4: Sub-grant Agreement template’ are provided for reference and will only be requested if the applicant is accepted to the programme. See also section 8 for a more detailed description on data protection throughout the application and evaluation stages. Please visit <https://www.niva.no> to

¹ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (“GDPR”) (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1)

check the privacy policy and security measures when sending the application in, or when sending emails to futurelakes@niva.no.

3 Eligibility criteria

All applicants must meet the requirements described in this section to be eligible for the FutureLakes Open Call.

3.1 Applicants' eligibility

FutureLakes invites applicants who are local and/or regional authorities from an "Associated Region" (AR). Associated regions are understood as regions with another natural lake located in EU Member States and/or Associated countries. Any other type of third parties according to the Horizon Europe conditions, like private for-profit organisations, higher education organisations or NGOs are not eligible, but can participate as sub-contractors to the AR. The proposing entities should be legal entities established in an eligible country and eligible for funding under Horizon Europe rules as indicated under section 3.2 of this document. In addition, it must be ensured that participating facilities are registered at the Funding & Tenders portal and have a 9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC)².

Applicants can only take part in one application to the Open Call and can only apply to one Open Call within the same Horizon Europe Topic ([HORIZON-MISS-2023-OCEAN-01-04](#)). Taking part in multiple applications or submitting applications to several Open Calls under the same Topic, will lead to rejection of all applications as ineligible.

3.2 Eligible countries

Single legal entities established in any of the following countries are eligible to participate in the FutureLakes Open Call:

- The Member States of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions.
- Horizon Europe [associated countries](#) (those that have signed an agreement with the EU as identified in the HE Programme Guide) according to the updated list published by the EC.
- **The country must not be represented in the FutureLakes consortium by an existing partner from that country.** Countries that are already part of the FutureLakes consortium and, therefore, excluded from the FutureLakes Open Call, are: Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland and United Kingdom.
- Local and regional authorities established in outermost regions of the EU are eligible to receive funding, provided that they are located in Member States other than those that are part of the project consortium. Outermost regions of Portugal (Azores and Madeira) and Spain (Canary Islands) are, therefore, eligible to apply.

A map of eligible countries is shown below in Figure 1.

² For more information, please visit:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/funding-tenders-opportunities/display/OM/Registration+and+validation+of+your+organisation>

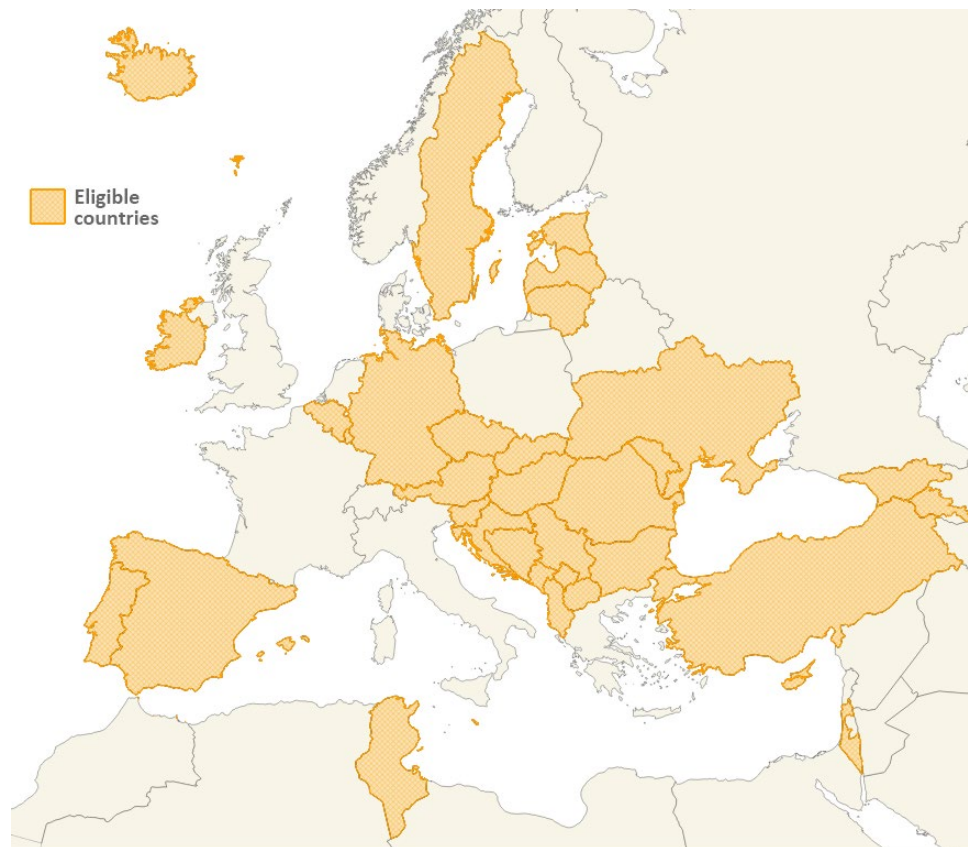


Figure 1. Map of eligible countries. Outermost regions of Portugal (Azores and Madeira) and Spain (Canary Islands) are eligible to apply. Note: Canada and New Zealand are eligible countries but are not shown on the map.

In general, the FutureLakes Open Call follows the rules applied by the EC for the R&D Programme Horizon Europe in terms of geographical coverage, eligibility, and exclusions, which take precedence. Entities listed within the EU Sanction Map³ are not eligible.

Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) will not be eligible to participate as recipients. Entities must also follow the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022 on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary.

3.3 Financial conditions

- The following financial conditions apply for proposals to be eligible:
- The total financial support per Associated Region is up to max. €54.000.
- The total amount requested must represent 100% of the total AR eligible costs and cover direct costs as personnel costs and purchase costs (for travel and subsistence) as well as

³ Found at: <https://www.sanctionsmap.eu/#/main>

indirect costs (up to 25%) for attending internal FutureLakes meetings and interactions with the consortium.

- The financial support will be provided in the form of a lump sum with maximum ceiling. After the evaluation of the call for FSTP, a lump sum share is fixed for each call and each beneficiary. This amount is paid in instalments, starting with a prefinancing of 50%, followed by the remaining payment of 50% upon completion of the different activities defined in the call. Thus, they will not be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred.
- Each "Associated Region" shall benefit only once from the Financial Support to Third Parties provided under this topic within the duration of the project. This includes all four projects funded under the same call⁴

3.4 Eligible activities

- Participation in meetings and workshops organised by the FutureLakes consortium.
- Consultation with key regional and national stakeholders.
- Preparing an action plan for at least one large lake in their region and an Upscaling Roadmap which outlines what restoration measures will be replicated or scaled-up to restore one or more lakes in their region.

3.5 Other conditions

Each applicant must confirm the eligibility conditions and rules of the Horizon Europe Programme (especially Articles 12, 13, 14, 17.2, 18, 19 and 20 of the FutureLakes Grant Agreement⁵):

- Article 12: The beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Agreement could be compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest (**'conflict of interests'**).
- Article 13: The parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing (**'sensitive information'**).
- Article 14: The action must be carried out in line with the highest **ethical standards** and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles. The beneficiaries must commit to and ensure the respect of basic **EU values** (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).
- Article 17.2: communication activities of the beneficiaries related to the action, dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by the grant must acknowledge EU support and display the **European flag** (emblem) and **funding statement**.

⁴ https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/HORIZON_HORIZON-MISS-2023-OCEAN-01-04/en

⁵ For more details visit: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf

- Article 18: Beneficiaries must follow the specific rules for carrying out the action set out in Annex 5 of the FutureLakes Grant Agreement.
- Article 19: The beneficiaries must provide any **information requested** to verify eligibility of the costs or contributions declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with the other obligations under the Agreement and they must keep their information stored in the **Participant Portal Register up to date**, in particular, their name, address, legal representatives, legal form and organisation type.
- Article 20: The beneficiaries **must keep records** and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the action in line with the accepted standards in the respective field.
- It is not excluded from the possibility of obtaining EU funding under the provisions of both national and EU law, or by a decision of both national and EU authority.

Note: Third parties receiving financial support from FutureLakes through the Open Call will not become part of the FutureLakes Grant Agreement. The FutureLakes Grant Agreement will not need to be amended to include the selected beneficiaries. Potential applicants are invited to read the EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual⁶ and the EU Grants AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement⁷

4 Open Call submission, selection and negotiation process

Proposals submitted to the FutureLakes – Open Call are submitted in a single stage and evaluated in two steps (see sections 5.1 and 5.2), as presented in Figure 2.

4.1 Proposal preparation and submission

The submission of proposals to the FutureLakes - Open Call will follow the steps listed in this section. The Open Call launches on 31/01/2025. The deadline for submission of proposals is 31/03/2025, 17:00 CET (Brussels time). Proposals will be evaluated, and successful regions will be notified and invited to start contract proceedings. It is expected that contracts will be signed and ARs will start engaging in FutureLakes activities no later than the end of Month 12 (30 September 2025).

Figure 2. Timetable of Open Call including submission and evaluation.



⁶ Visit the EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/funding-tenders-opportunities/display/OM/Online+Manual>

⁷ <https://european-digital-innovation-hubs.ec.europa.eu/knowledge-hub/guidance-documents/annotated-grant-agreement-all-eu-funding-programmes-2021-27>

4.2 Documentation

The Open Call is supported by the following documentation, which can be found at <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>

Applicants are encouraged to read and download all relevant files before proceeding with the submission.

- Guidelines for Applicants (this document).
- Annex 1: Application form, available at <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>
- Annex 2: Declaration of Honour (template) to be signed by each Party participating in an application), available at <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>
- Annex 3: Legal entity form (template) - all consortium partners must complete, available at <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>
- Annex 4: Sub-grant agreement (template) that the successful applicants will be requested to sign, available at <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>
- Annex 5: Bank account information form (template) for the lead applicant (only needs to be completed by successful applicants), available at <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>

4.3 Proposal preparation and submission

Applicants must consider the following when preparing their proposal:

1. Applicants are required to answer all mandatory questions in the application forms (with no exception), available at: <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>
2. Any submission provided by any means other than through the FutureLakes email address will not be accepted.
3. Only proposals from eligible applicants will be evaluated.
4. Applicants are recommended to become familiar with Annex 4 - Sub-grant agreement. This document must only be provided if the applicant is selected and is mandatory to finalise the contract and enter the funding programme. Successful applicants should also be prepared to provide supporting documentation of their legal status and eligibility.

NOTE: only certified electronic signature (QES) will be accepted

5. If an extension to the Open Call deadline is needed, all applicants will be notified.

5 Proposal evaluation and selection

The evaluation of proposals is carried out by an evaluation board consisting of the Project Management Board of FutureLakes and external experts from European/national organisations, this includes representatives from our sister projects funded under the same Topic (HORIZON-MISS-2023-OCEAN-01-04). The FutureLakes consortium, represented by its Project Management Board, ensures that the process is fair and in line with the principles outlined in the European Commission's rules on proposal submission and evaluation.

5.1 STEP 1. Eligibility verification

An initial eligibility verification will be done to filter out and discard non-eligible proposals. Proposals must meet ALL the following eligibility criteria, which will check the following:

1. Submissions have been made ONLY using the FutureLakes Application form and by the defined deadline.
2. The proposing entities are legal entities established in an eligible country and eligible for funding under Horizon Europe rules as indicated under 3.2 of this document.
3. The proposing applicant meets the call requirements for an Associated Region. Non-eligible parties (e.g. universities or research institutes) from an eligible AR can only participate as sub-contractors to the AR.
4. The proposal, including the application form and all requested and mandatory information and documents, is completed.
5. The proposal is written in English.

The eligibility check enables the creation of a shortlist of proposals to be evaluated in the next step of the evaluation process.

Proposals marked as non-eligible (for not meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria) will receive a rejection letter with justification of the decision.

5.2 STEP 2. Proposal evaluation

Proposals considered eligible will move on to the evaluation phase.

The selection of Associated Regions will be made by an evaluation board consisting of the Project Management Board and independent external experts. Recognised experts from sister projects (e.g. ProCleanLakes, FERRO and EUROLakes) and pan-European organisations represented in our Stakeholder Advisory Board (e.g. Water Europe, Global Water Partnership, EC JRC) will be invited to join the evaluation board.

Evaluators are required to be independent, impartial, and objective. The selected experts must sign a declaration of confidentiality concerning the contents of the proposals they review, and all evaluators must confirm the absence of any conflict of interest with any individual application. Any known conflict of interest will be immediately communicated to the FutureLakes coordination team who are managing this process. Evaluators will also be bound by strict confidentiality regarding the evaluation during and after the evaluation process. The assessment will be made on the criteria, scores and minimum thresholds precisely described in these Guidelines for Applicants. The proposals will be scored based on the criteria below (Table 1).

Main criteria	Sub-criteria
Suitability	Regions having one or more natural lakes that can benefit from building capacity to implement innovative solutions to restore freshwater ecosystems.

Language	Applicants should have a good command of English.
Relevance to FutureLakes	How much does the proposal relate to the FutureLakes project objectives? To make the FSTP more effective, proposals that include a lake affected by similar pressures to one of our Demo sites will be prioritised over proposals with lakes impacted by pressures not significantly affecting our Demo sites.
Impact:	What is the estimated impact regionally, nationally and for FutureLakes for the associated region to join the project? What are the capacity needs of the region/country? What is the expected impact for the MISSION Restore our Ocean and Waters? Proposals from countries not represented in the consortia of any of the four projects funded under the Topic will be prioritised to maximise impact.
Implementation:	Do the planned activities for co-creation with stakeholders and implementation of restoration measures seem feasible in terms of resources available (human, technical, financial, institutional) to undertake the project activities? Is there already some existing knowledge (experts, previous projects) or ambition to implement measures?

Each sub-criterion will be scored between 1 and 5. Half point scores are not given. For each sub-criterion under examination, score values will indicate the rationale presented in Table 2.

Table 2. FutureLakes Open Call scoring rationale

Score	Rationale
1 / Poor	The proposal addresses the criterion in an inadequate manner or there are significant weaknesses.

2 / Fair	The proposal addresses the criterion broadly, but there are still several weaknesses.
3 / Good	The proposal addresses the criterion well, but improvements are necessary.
4 / Very Good	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but some improvements are still possible.
5 / Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

5.3 Ranking of proposals and selection

At the end of the review process, all proposals will be ranked in a single list. The primary rule for ranking proposals will be their overall score, based on the average scores of the evaluators. In case multiple proposals are ranked with the same score, a consensus meeting will be convened in order to select the ones for funding. Criteria for prioritisation between concurring proposals will be increasing geographic coverage of countries in projects funded under this call and representativeness of lakes with similar pressures as those affecting FutureLakes Demo sites.

Five to six of the highest ranked applications will be invited to a short interview and presentation of their proposal to the evaluation board. The final ranking of the proposals will be made after the interviews in the form of a ranked list of all proposals, based on the average scores obtained by each proposal. The top three proposals will be invited to the contract negotiation phase. The three proposals that do not make the top three list will be invited to the reserve list. All proposals will receive an acceptance or rejection letter together with an anonymised version of their evaluation report. The outcome of the call will be published without delay, including a short description of the proposals, the date of the award, the duration, and the legal name and country of the sub-grantees.

Note: the contract as provided to the sub-grantee is final and may not be changed, including the addition or removal of any articles or other content.

5.4 Use of qualified Electronic Signatures (QES)

FutureLakes will use certified electronic signatures in all documents included in the proposal and in the subsequent sub-grant agreements. A certified electronic signature is an advanced electronic signature which is additionally created by a qualified signature creation device (QSCD) and is based on a qualified certificate for electronic signatures. Applicants can use any Digital Signature Services that support certified electronic signatures.

The European Commission proposes a demo of DSS (Digital Signature Services), a tool that enables the signature of documents. More information about certified electronic signatures is available [here](#).

Following evaluation of proposals, successful ARs will be notified and requested to complete the sub-grant agreement. After notification of success, it is expected that the negotiation should be concluded within 3 weeks. An additional period may be provided by the FutureLakes coordinator in case of extenuating circumstances. In case negotiations have not been concluded within the above period, the proposal is automatically rejected and the next proposal in the reserve list is invited to initiate the contract preparation.

At the end of the contract preparation and negotiation phase, the sub-grant agreement (Annex 4) will be signed between the FutureLakes consortium represented by its coordinator (NIVA), who is responsible for the reimbursement of the costs, and the task lead beneficiary (IRIDRA), who is responsible for supporting the ARs in their work.

6 Specifications of AR projects in FutureLakes

6.1 Project Implementation

The Project implementation will run until 30 September 2027 and will include the following tasks:

- (i) Identify an individual from the Associated Region to act as a main contact point for engaging with FutureLakes activities.
- (ii) Attend online meetings for FutureLakes Task 5.3 and other relevant WP workshops (no travel costs).
- (iii) Attend two FutureLakes in-person all-partner meetings in Poland in 2026 and the Netherlands in 2027. Travel costs of representatives from the Associated Region are to be covered by the financial support they receive.
- (iv) Consult with key regional and national stakeholders on a lake basin management plan.
- (v) With support from Task 5 .3 partners and key stakeholders, co-develop a regional action plan for at least one large lake in their region.
- (vi) In collaboration with Task 5 .3 partners, finalise an Upscaling Roadmap for their region (FutureLakes Deliverable 5.3, Due Month 34, July 2027). This is a plan to replicate and scale-up measures to restore one or more lakes in their region.
- (vii) Milestone dates for delivery to the task 5.3 leader of a draft action plan and the final plan and roadmap are to be confirmed before the sub-grant agreement is signed, but it is anticipated to be the end of October 2026 for the draft action plan and May 2027 for the finalised plan & roadmap. An additional milestone for a brief inception report by December 2025 is also anticipated. This will document the local challenges for the lake, mapping current activities and documenting available data.

It is expected that associated regions will develop an action plan for at least one lake in their region to showcase the feasibility, replicability, and scalability of the approaches and innovative solutions developed within FutureLakes. They will also develop a roadmap, on how they plan to implement restoration measures to restore the ecological and chemical status and biodiversity of lake(s) in their region.

In line with FutureLakes objectives, and the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters goals, this action plan for upscaling restoration measures should focus on some of the following aims:

- Improving ecological and chemical status of your lake
- Restoring biodiversity in and around your lake
- Enhancing the Blue Economy in and around your lake

- Engaging the public in lake monitoring or management activities
- Making society more resilient to climate change
- Establishing circular economies through recovering resources from lake sediments or lake biota

In your application form, we need you to provide sufficient background on the lake(s) of your region, and your team, for us to evaluate your suitability to receive support from FutureLakes to develop an ambitious plan to achieve these goals. You may want to identify innovations being tested or demonstrated in FutureLakes that you think are of interest and relevant to your lake's challenges. You are not necessarily expected to implement any specific restoration measures during the timeframe of the FutureLakes project, but more focus on activities to engage with regional and national stakeholders to ensure your action plan is co-developed and has regional and national support.

6.2 Reporting and additional requirements

The Funding Recipient must report on the implementation of the funded Project by submitting an interim and final report. The technical reports must show the use of the granted funding, the verifiable report on the implementation of the funded Project and the outcomes achieved, accompanied by a financial report on the expenditure. The Funding Body reserves the right to inspect the original receipts or to request their submission later.

Additional contributions may be required both during the project, and after the applicant ends its activities in FutureLakes, beyond those mandatory to release payments. Such reporting will be requested to ensure that the FutureLakes project respects any specific requests of the EC, to ensure compliance, or to support the promotion of the projects. Such requests may include, but are not limited to:

- Details on data management practices of the beneficiaries, as part of the project they are implementing or specific to the entity.
- Details on origin and management of data that is being brought into the project (using an existing data provider) and not generated exclusively during the project implementation.
- Details on ethics and quality management practices of the beneficiaries, as part of the project they are implementing or specific to the entity.
- Contributions to continuous reporting of communication and dissemination activities to the EC and to periodic reporting due in Months 19 and Month 37 summarising work done and results achieved during the first and second half of the projects.
- Information about the implementation and conclusions of the project to develop promotional materials (e.g., videos, success stories).
- Statistics on researchers and employees working on the project for the beneficiary.

The selected entities are indirectly beneficiaries of EC funding. Therefore, selected entities are responsible for the appropriate use of the funding and must comply with obligations under Horizon Europe specific requirements as described in [the Reference documents for Horizon Europe](#).

Specific details and guidelines related to all aspects of the responsibilities of the beneficiaries are provided in the sub-grant agreement.

7 Responsibilities of the beneficiaries

7.1 Conflict of interest

Beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the sub-project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest').

They must formally notify the FutureLakes coordinator without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interest and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The FutureLakes coordinator will verify if the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specific deadline.

If a sub-granted project consortium member breaches any of its obligations, the sub-grant agreement may be automatically terminated. Moreover, costs may be rejected.

7.2 Checks and reviews

The EC may, at any time during the implementation of the sub-project and up to five years after the end of the sub-project, arrange for a check and review to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC services themselves, including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC.

Each beneficiary commits to a proper use of the funding received, for the purpose of carrying out the project in compliance with the defined milestones and expected deliverables. At the end of the project funded by the open call, a financial statement will be submitted by each beneficiary to the FutureLakes project coordinator for assessment.

7.3 Promoting the action and giving visibility to the EU funding

The beneficiary must promote the sub-project, the FutureLakes project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to always highlight the financial support of the EC.

8 Confidentiality and data protection

8.1 Application stage

A complete list of applicants will be prepared containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity, which will be also shared with EC for transparency and with the other Projects financed under the same Topic for coordination of the calls. The applicants' list will not be public but will serve as statistics in project communication materials.

8.2 Evaluation stage

To process and evaluate proposals, FutureLakes will need to collect personal and industrial data and the full applications will be shared with the evaluation board. The FutureLakes consortium ensures

that data are managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).

FutureLakes may share the proposals with selected external reviewers, with whom non-disclosure agreements will be signed to protect the confidential information given by the applicants. Please note that FutureLakes requests the minimum information needed to deliver the evaluation procedures or the implementation of the funding programme. Further legal and financial information will only be requested if the consortium entities are accepted in the programme. Please see <https://futurelakes.eu/calls>.

The final list of the awarded projects and beneficiaries will be made public, including the name of the projects, abstract, legal name of the entity, type of entity, country of origin, project results, duration, and budget.

9 Contact information

The FutureLakes consortium will provide information to the applicants primarily via <https://futurelakes.eu/calls> so that all information (questions and answers) will be accessible to all potential applicants.

No binding information will be provided via any other means (e.g., telephone or email).

- More info about FutureLakes at: <https://futurelakes.eu>
- More information about the FutureLakes Open Call: <https://www.futurelakes.eu/calls>
- Apply via futurelakes@niva.no
- FutureLakes support team: futurelakes@niva.no

10 Acknowledgements & Disclaimer

FutureLakes is funded by the European Union through a Horizon Europe Innovation Action under Grant Agreement Number 101156425. The project contributes to the Mission Restore our Ocean & Waters. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.