7. Environment, health and safety

This section concerns projects with activities that may adversely affect:

- the environment or
- the health and safety of the persons involved.

This may be due to any of the following:

- the experimental design of the project itself (especially for research projects)
- undesirable side-effects of the technologies used.

7.1 Environment

7.1.1 Ethics issues checklist

Section 7: ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND SAFETY	YES/NO		Information to be provided in the proposal	Documents to be provided on request
Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes (or technologies) that may cause harm to the environment, to animals or plants (during the implementation of the activity or further to the use of the results, as a possible impact)? *For research involving animal experiments, see section 5.*	☐	☐	1) Risk-benefit analysis. 2) Show how you apply the precautionary principle (if relevant). 3) Details on safety measures to be implemented.	1) Safety classification of laboratory. 2) Copy of GMO and other authorisations (if required).
Does this activity deal with endangered fauna and/or flora / protected areas?	☐	☐	1) Details on endangered fauna and/or flora / protected areas.	1) Specific authorisations (if required).

7.1.2 How do I deal with the issues?

Your activities must comply with the ethics provisions set out in the Grant Agreement, and notably:

- highest ethical standards
- applicable international, EU and national law (in particular, the precautionary principle and legislation on nature conservation and pollution control).

The precautionary principle requires that where there is plausible scientific evidence for serious risks, you must prove that a new technology will not harm the environment.

The legislation on nature conservation and pollution control includes the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, the EU Wild Birds Directive 79/409/EEC, EU Wild Fauna Protection Regulation 338/97, the EU GMO Directive 2009/41/EC and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

This means you must assess potential risks to the environment and avoid or minimise the risks.

Moreover, you must obtain:

- the necessary environmental authorisations (if applicable).

⚠ You must obtain all relevant national authorisations before you can start your activities.

7.1.3 What do you need to provide?

If your proposal raises one of the issues listed in the ethics issue checklist above, you must complete the **ethics self-assessment** in **Part A** of your proposal.

Your grant proposal must include the **information** referred to in the ethics issues checklist and any of the **documents** already available.

⚠ Documents that are not submitted together with the proposal should be kept on file and may have to be provided later on, if requested by the granting authority.

7.2 Health and safety

The health and safety of all human participants must be a priority in all EU projects — especially in research projects where participants may be subjects, investigators or uninvolved third parties.

The kinds of risk to human safety vary according to the nature of the project, discipline, topic and location. Only the 'person in the field' can fully assess safety concerns and/or their willingness to tolerate risks.

However, you need to take into account that both familiar and unfamiliar settings can involve additional safety concerns. Even in familiar settings, surprising, non-routine things can happen which pose safety risks.

Moreover, in certain types of research, the risk of harm to the researcher is caused by the topic of study or by the actions of the researchers themselves. Lack of caution or failure to obey standard procedures may lead to physical or psychological harm.

⚠ Improved safety practices may impose additional cost burdens, which can be included in your estimated budget.

7.2.1 Ethics issues checklist

Section 7: ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND SAFETY	YES/NO		Information to be provided in the proposal	Documents to be provided on request
Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes (or technologies) that may cause harm to humans, including those performing the activity (during the implementation of the activity or further to the use of the results, or the deployment of the technology as a possible impact)? *For activities involving human participants, see section 2.*	☐	☐	1) Details of the health and safety procedures.	1) Safety classification of laboratory. 2) Host Institution safety procedures.

7.2.2 How do I deal with the issues?

Your activities must comply with the ethics provisions set out in the Grant Agreement, and notably:

- highest ethical standards
- applicable international, EU and national law (in particular, the legislation on public-health control *(e.g. regulating conduct in animal epidemics, food imports, consumer protection, etc.)* and safety at work *(e.g. Directive 2006/25)*).

This means you must warn and advise project teams and staff. In some cases you must even remove them from dangerous situations.

Moreover, you should establish and follow a set of safety checks and procedures (or a more in-depth risk assessment) for the activities they conduct.

You must also obtain:

- the necessary health and safety authorisations (if applicable).

Specific cases

Toxic chemicals and/or **explosives** — Staff should have adequate training in storing, handling and disposing of such substances. If new substances and/or formulations *(e.g. nanomaterials)* are developed, you must provide adequate risk assessments.

Radioactive material — Clear legislation exists in all EU countries on the storage, handling and disposal of radioactive materials.

The release of radioactive material into the environment is allowed only if you can show that use of alternatives *(e.g. non-radioactive stable isotopes, simulants etc.)* is not possible.

Work 'in the field' — Establish and abide by recognised procedures to help keep teams and participants safe. These should include:

- keeping careful notes of all work engagements
- ensuring projects are adequately staffed
- using mobile phones to keep in touch with the home base
- conducting full risk assessments of fieldwork sites
- formally notifying authorities of activities being conducted in an area
- carrying authorised identification
- preparation and training covering techniques for handling conflict, threats, abuse or compromising situations
- debriefing after fieldwork with an assessment of safety and
- reporting of health and safety incidents.

7.2.3 What do you need to provide?

If your proposal raises one of the issues listed in the ethics issue checklist above, you must complete the **ethics self-assessment** in **Part A** of your proposal.

Your grant proposal must include the **information** referred to in the ethics issues checklist and any of the **documents** already available. Documents that are not submitted together with the proposal should be kept on file and may have to be provided later on, if requested by the granting authority.

Background documents & further reading

General environment

EU Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p.7)

EU Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 103, 25.4.1979, p.1)

EU Regulation 338/97 of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein (OJ L 103, 25.4.1979, p.1)

Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

EU Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 March 2001 on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms (OJ L 106, 17.4.2001, p. 1)

EU Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) (OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19)

GMOs

EU Regulation 1946/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2003 on trans-boundary movements of genetically modified organisms (OJ L 287, 5.11.2003, p. 1)

EU Directive 2009/41/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 on the contained use of genetically modified micro-organisms (OJ L 125, 21.5.2009, p. 75)

Public health and consumer protection

Consumer safety

Health and safety at work

EU Directive 2006/25/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2006 on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of the workers to risks arising from physical agents (OJ L 114, 27.4.2006, p.38)

A Code of Practice for the Safety of Social Researchers