

  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
2007-2013

**Monitoring Committee for Operational Programme 1**  
**Investing in Competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life**  
**Cohesion Policy 2007 - 2013**  
**Axis 1 – Enhancing Knowledge & Innovation**

Environmental Improvements Grant Scheme:  
*Stimulating Environmental Excellence in Maltese Enterprises*

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008



  
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## Rationale

The schemes are designed to provide the stimulus necessary to encourage Maltese SMEs to embrace high environmental quality as key driving force rather than regard it as a barrier to competitiveness.




  
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## The schemes framework

The 3 schemes will provide support for:

- Environmental management audits
- Environmental enhancement & eco-innovation
- Environmental certification




  
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## Thematic criteria (environmental audits scheme)

The applicants will be requested to provide justification for undertaking an environmental management audit of their operations. The extent to which an applicant is considering the different priority areas outlined below:

- Reduction in emissions to air;
- Reduction in discharges to water;
- Reduction in noise emissions;
- Reduction in impact on nature and biodiversity;
- Better land-use and rehabilitation of contaminated land;
- Better management of waste;
- Better management of chemicals; and
- Reduction in consumption of resources.



  
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## Thematic criteria - environmental enhancement & eco-innovation scheme

The applicants will be requested to provide technical justification for investment, based on the recommendations of the environmental management audit. Scoring shall be given for:

- investments that involve the adoption of environmentally sensitive technologies, operating systems and processes that address the different priority areas (as per environmental audits)
- proposals that are considered innovative
- proposals having a positive effect on employment.



  
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## Thematic criteria - environmental certification scheme

The applicants will be requested to provide technical justification for achieving recognised environmental certification:

- Eco Label certification for product or service group
- Eco Label for individual product or service
- Attainment of full EMAS certification
- Attainment of ISO 14000 environmental series certification
- Other environmental standards recognised by MSA
- An additional score of up to 5% may be awarded if the applicant proves that the certification is likely to have positive effect on employment.



  
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## Focus of assistance

Main focus on sectors with high impact on environment:

- Manufacturing enterprises
- Quarrying and construction
- Transport (selected classes – not vehicles)
- Community, social and personal service



  
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## Criteria for inclusion of sectors

- The sector's relative size in terms of the number of SMEs, employment and turnover;
- The sector's relative environmental footprint in terms of the relative share of pollution and impact on the environment generated by the sector;
- Whether the sector is covered by any other current or proposed Government scheme or measure, from which it may benefit for environmental improvements.





## State aid regime

- The scheme will be implemented under the *de minimis* regime
- This regime is most appropriate for the broad nature of intended assistance where it is not desirable to earmark fixed investments for pre-defined areas (e.g. waste management, resource efficiency, etc) and apply differential grant rates.
- Aid intensity – 85% public funds for scheme 1 and 60% for schemes 2 and 3

