



## **OUTPUT INDICATOR GUIDANCE**

### **INTERREG VA**

Cross-border Programme for Territorial Co-operation 2014-2020, Northern Ireland, Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland

**Thematic Objective 6**  
**Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency**

**Priority Axis 2**  
**Environment**

**Investment Priority 2a**

Protecting and Restoring Biodiversity

**Specific Indicator 2.1**  
The recovery of habitat and species within protected areas

## Document Control

Document History		
Version	Date	Changes
1.0	January 2016	Drafted by Carly Gordon (NISRA)
2.0	December 2016	Drafted by Ben Davoll (NISRA)

## INTRODUCTION

INTERREG VA - United Kingdom - Ireland is a European Territorial Cooperation programme that aims to promote greater economic, social and territorial cohesion. The eligible region for this programme comprises Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland, and Western Scotland.

Ireland and Northern Ireland share a land border, whilst the border between Ireland and Scotland is a maritime border. Northern Ireland and Scotland are also separated by the North Channel. In all cases the regions concerned are peripheral to the main economic centres of their respective Member States. The contrasting nature of the borders within the eligible area means that different approaches to promoting cross-border co-operation need to be adopted, depending on the nature of the border and the sector involved.

The following strategic areas of investment have been prioritised by the Member States for the 2014-2020 period:

- Smart Growth Priority: Thematic Objective 1 – Strengthening Research, Technological Development and Innovation - The programme will contribute to the objective within EU2020 of increasing the spend on Research and Development (R&D) to 3% of GDP by 2020, by establishing increased cross-border R&D competence building, for Life and Health Sciences and Renewable Energy. Additionally, R&D into renewable energy technologies may contribute to EU2020 targets and lead to reductions in the use of carbon resources and emissions.
- Sustainable Growth Priority: Thematic Objective 6 – Preserving and Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency- The inclusion in the programme of the protection and preservation of habitats and species, an emphasis on water and marine management will contribute to enhancing the region’s sustainability and is congruent with the priority for sustainable growth outlined in strategy EU2020.
- Sustainable Growth Priority: Thematic Objective 7 – Promoting Sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures – The promotion of electric vehicles; greenways; and multimodal transport links have the purpose of reducing the reliance upon carbon forms of transport in the region and underpins the EU2020 strategic objective of creating sustainable growth.
- Inclusive Growth Priority: Thematic Objective 9 – Promoting Social Inclusion, Combating Poverty and any discrimination. The needs analysis of the region has

identified inequalities in health care provision for those citizens living in the border area. The inclusion of improved access to cross-border health services is in line with the EU 2020 strategy to generate inclusive growth.

This document provides descriptions and definitions for the output indicators under specific objective 2.1 presented in the new INTERREG VA Programme 2014 – 2020.

Priority axes (PA) are the building blocks of programmes; the PAs are defined as follows: PA 1 – *Research and Innovation*, PA 2 – *Environment*, PA 3 – *Sustainable Transport*, and PA 4 – *Health*. This document includes a diagram highlighting the investment priorities, specific objectives, result and output indicators, as well as descriptions and definitions of the specific objective 2.1 output indicators in detail.

## GENERAL DEFINITIONS

The Programme's impact is monitored through the use of output and result indicators<sup>1</sup>. This section provides a definition of output and result indicators. Projects receiving funding through INTERREG VA will be expected to report progress against output indicators only, so this document goes on to outline definitions and guidance relating to output indicators only.

**Output Indicators:** Link to activities of operation. They are measured in physical or monetary units (e.g. length of road constructed, number of firms financially supported) and contribute to result indicators.

*Output indicators* cover all investment priorities of a programme (art. 27.4(b), 96.2(b) CPR). They should be derived from the intervention logic of the programme, expressing its actions. Output indicators from the list of common indicators may be insufficient to reflect the actions of a certain programme; in this case it was necessary to also identify programme specific output indicators.

The programme shall set *cumulative targets* for output indicators for 2023 (art. 6, ERDF regulation; art. 5, CF regulation; art. 16, ETC regulation). Baselines for output indicators are not required.

**Result Indicators:** Relate to specific objectives and capture the expected change.

Each priority axis includes one or more investment priorities according to their specific needs and context. The specific objective is the expression of what each investment priority aims to achieve (see art.2.34, CPR for legal definition of a specific objective). The change sought by the specific objective is expressed in one *result indicator*, or as few as possible.<sup>2</sup>

Result indicators shall meet certain quality criteria. They should be:

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<sup>1</sup> Ecorys Academy. (2014). Training to Managing Authorities: Intervention logic - Explaining the result orientation of 2014-2020.

<sup>2</sup> EC (2014). The programming period 2014-2020: Guidance document on monitoring and evaluation. Retrieved from: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/2014/working/wd\\_2014\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/2014/working/wd_2014_en.pdf)

- a) responsive to policy: closely linked to the policy interventions supported. They should capture the essence of a result according to a reasonable argument about which features they can and cannot represent;
- b) normative: having a clear and accepted normative interpretation (i.e. there must be agreement that a movement in a particular direction is a favourable or an unfavourable result);
- c) robust: reliable, statistically validated;
- d) timely: available when needed, with room built in for debate and for revision when needed and justified.

## **GUIDANCE FOR MEASURING AND RECORDING ACHIEVEMENT FOR INDICATORS**

The following is some general advice to take into account when recording achievement against output indicators on the database in relation to project monitoring for the 2014-2020 Programme (DB2014). The purpose of this is to ensure that all projects record accurately and consistently; ensuring that Programme level reporting on progress against indicators is reflective of each of the projects that have received funding and are contributing to Programme aims and objectives.

- The lead partner is the source of data for all indicators, as they should collect and/or collate relevant data from project partners and managers to report against each of the output indicators relevant to their project.
- Achievement should be updated on a quarterly basis, even if there is nothing to report (in this case a '0' should be entered).
- Please note, when collecting data relating to individuals (e.g. numbers trained, numbers treated, numbers participating etc...) a breakdown by gender should also be collected and recorded.
- In addition to indicators and targets, Lead Partners will also have to agree milestones, where relevant. These will be project specific, included in the Letter of Offer and will have to be reported against regularly to show progress towards achieving an output indicator.
- Level of recording - Activity/achievement should only be entered at one level i.e. preferably only the lead partner will enter any achievement against their project, to avoid any possibility of duplicate recording and ensure consistency. Entries will then be quality assured by the Joint Secretariat and the Financial Control Unit in SEUPB. Where monitoring data is being collected by, for instance, service providers as opposed to the lead partner; the lead partner should take responsibility for collating monitoring data from the various sub-projects/project managers/service providers, and record activity on DB2014 on a quarterly basis.
- Cumulative within year - Entries of achievement against a project can be made several times over the course of a calendar year; however new entries will overwrite previous entries so they should be on cumulative basis for each year i.e. each new

entry should include all achievement so far that year even if a report has already been made. However, between years, achievement should be on a non-cumulative basis.

*For example:* Surface areas of habitats supported – there could be 3 entries against this indicator in the 2015 calendar year, so if in the first 3 months 2,000 hectares was supported the project lead partner should record 2,000; then if another 500 hectares were supported in the following 6 months, a total of 2,500 should be reported; and if another 500 hectares was supported in the last 3 months of 2015, an entry of 3,000 hectares should be made in the last quarter. That will make a total achievement of 3,000 hectares in 2015, and the counter should reset to 0 for 2016.

Projects should also note that activity should be recorded in the year to which it relates, rather than the date it was entered, i.e. if an activity took place in December of 2017 but not recorded until January 2018, the entry should be made under 2017.

- Record achievement as information becomes available - Achievement against output indicators at the INTERREG Programme level is reported on at several times during the year (including Spring and Autumn Programme Monitoring Committees and the Annual Implementation Report that is produced by calendar year). Ideally, projects should not wait until the year end to enter all achievement in one go. It would be more beneficial to report achievement at regular intervals, ideally not later than the end of each quarter, to ensure that Programme level reports are as accurate and up to date as possible, reflecting the output achievement of all projects at that point in time. Projects should note that even if there is no achievement against certain output indicators there is still the need to update monitoring entries. In this case projects, should enter zero.
- Check wording and definitions - this document contains a list of the relevant indicators and associated definitions and units. Please ensure you are reporting accurate, relevant information, avoiding double counting and using the correct unit (e.g. enterprises, patients, percentage etc).

*For example,* 'number of enterprises engaging an intern'; the unit here is enterprises, so you should not record the number of interns as this may lead to double counting if an enterprise



employs more than one intern. It should be the number of enterprises and each enterprise should only be counted once.

**INTERREG Cross-Border Programme 2014-2020**  
**€240 million ERDF (plus 15% match funding)**  
**Max 85% intervention rate**

**Thematic Objective 1**  
**Strengthening research, technological development and innovation**

**Thematic Objective 6**  
**Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency**

**Thematic Objective 7**  
**Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures**

**Thematic Objective 9**  
**Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination**

**Priority Axis 1**  
**Research and Innovation**

**Priority Axis 2**  
**Environment**

**Priority Axis 3**  
**Sustainable Transport**

**Priority Axis 4**  
**Health**

**Investment Priority 1a**  
**Enhancing research and innovation**

**Investment Priority 1b**  
**Promoting business investment in R&I**

**Investment Priority 2a**  
**Protecting and restoring biodiversity**

**Investment Priority 2b**  
**Investing in the water sector**

**Investment Priority 3a**  
**Developing and Improving Environmentally-friendly and low carbon transport systems**

**Investment Priority 4.a**  
**Investing in health and social infrastructure**

**Specific Objective 1.1**

**Specific Objective 1.2**

**Specific Objective 2.1**

**Specific Objective 2.2**

**Specific Objective 2.3**

**Specific Objective 2.4**

**Specific Objective 3.1**

**Specific Objective 4.1**

To increase business and industry relevant research and innovation capacity across the region within two target sectors; Health and Life Sciences and Renewable Energies.

To increase the number and capacity of SMEs engaged in cross-border research and innovation activity in the region aimed at the development of new products, processes and services

To promote cross-border co-operation to facilitate the recovery of selected protected habitats and priority species

To develop cross-border co-operation capacity for the monitoring and management of marine protected areas and species in the region

To improve water quality in shared transitional waters

To improve fresh water quality in cross-border river basins

Promote cross-border intermodal and sustainable mobility in the cross-border region

Through collaboration on a cross-border basis, to improve the health and well-being of people living in the region by enabling them to access quality health and social care services in the most appropriate setting to their needs

**€45 million (approx)**

**€ 16 million (approx)**

**€ 11 million (approx)**

**€ 11 million (approx)**

**€ 30 million (approx)**

**€ 20 million (approx)**

**€ 40 million (approx)**

**€ 53 million (approx)**

**Thematic Objective 6**  
**Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource**

**Priority Axis 2 – Environment**

**Investment Priority 2a**  
 Protecting and restoring biodiversity

**Investment Priority 2b**  
 Investing in the water sector

**Specific Objective 2.1**

To promote cross-border co-operation to facilitate the recovery of selected protected habitats and priority species

**Result Indicator:** The percentage of selected protected habitats in or approaching favourable condition

**Output Indicators**

- Surface area of habitats supported in order to attain a better conservation status (common indicator)
- Conservation action plans

**Specific Objective 2.2**

To develop cross-border capacity for the monitoring and management of marine protected areas and species in the region

**Result Indicator:** Cross-border capacity for monitoring and management of marine protected areas and species.

**Output Indicators**

- Network of buoys for regional seas, including telemetry and oceanographic monitoring e.g. for seals, cetaceans and salmonids
- Models developed to support conservation of habitats and species
- Management plans for designated protected areas complete
- System for the prediction of bathing water quality and install real time signage

**Specific Objective 2.3**

To improve water quality in shared transitional waters

**Result Indicator:** Percentage of the shared transitional waters in the region with good or high quality

**Output Indicators**

- Waste water treatment: Additional population served by improved wastewater treatment
- Sewage network and waste water treatment projects to improve water quality in shared transitional waters

**Specific Objective 2.4**

To improve fresh water quality in cross-border river basins

**Result Indicator:** Percentage of cross-border freshwater bodies in cross-border river basins with good or high quality

**Output Indicators**

- Cross-border drinking water sustainable catchment area management plan: Research and pilot project
- Develop and implement cross-border groundwater monitoring wells
- Establish 3 river water quality improvement projects

## **Specific Objective 2.1: To promote cross-border co-operation to facilitate the recovery of selected protected habitats and priority species**

The EU is committed to the [protection of biodiversity](#), and to halting biodiversity loss within the EU by 2020. Member States will designate sites as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and adopt conservation measures involving, if need be, appropriate management plans and other measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types and the species of Community interest. The aim is to protect vulnerable habitats and species across their natural range in Europe and ensure that they are restored to, or maintained at, a favourable conservation status.

The conservation status distinguishes between a 'favourable' and an 'unfavourable' status of natural habitats. Article 1(e) of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC<sup>3</sup> provides clear requirements that indicate a 'favourable' status:

*The conservative status of a natural habitat will be taken as 'favourable' when:*

- *its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and*
- *the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and*
- *the conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined as follows:*
  - *population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;*
  - *the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future;*
  - *there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.*

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<sup>3</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora [1992] OJ No L 206/7. Retrieved 22/10/2014 from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043&from=EN>

## **SPECIFIC INDICATORS**

The following is a list of the indicators relevant to this call, with associated targets, definitions and reporting details.

The overall aim of this call is to improve the condition of protected habitats in the eligible region and increase the number of habitats in or approaching favourable condition.

## OUTPUT INDICATORS

<b>Indicator CO23</b>	<b>Surface area of habitats supported in order to attain a better conservation status (common indicator)</b>
<b>Measurement Unit</b>	Hectares
<b>Target Value (2023)</b>	4,500
<b>Definition</b>	<p>Surface of restored or created areas aimed to improve the conservation status of threatened species. The operations can be carried out both in or outside of Natura 2000<sup>4</sup> areas, capable of improving the conservation status of targeted species, habitats or ecosystems for biodiversity and the provisioning of ecosystem-services. Areas that receive support repeatedly should be counted only once.</p> <p><b>Conservation Status</b></p> <p>A technical paper for reporting on Article 17<sup>5</sup> states that Conservation Status is given as one of three classes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favourable</li> <li>• Unfavourable inadequate (change in management or policy is required to return the habitat type or species to favourable status but there is no danger of extinction in the foreseeable future)</li> <li>• Unfavourable bad (serious danger of becoming extinct, at least regionally)</li> </ul> <p>There is also an 'Unknown' class which can be used where there is insufficient information available to allow an assessment.</p> <p>The conservation status distinguishes between a 'favourable' and an 'unfavourable' status of natural habitats<sup>6</sup>.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better status</li> </ul> <p>An 'improvement' of the conservation status of a habitat describes the change from 'unfavourable' to 'favourable'<sup>6</sup> status.</p>
<b>Achievement</b>	Achievement should be recorded upon completion of activities in the supported areas and an improvement demonstrated.

<sup>4</sup> **Natura 2000** is a network of [nature protection areas](#) in the territory of the [European Union](#). It is made up of [Special Areas of Conservation](#) (SACs) and [Special Protection Areas](#) (SPAs) designated respectively under the [Habitats Directive](#) and [Birds Directive](#). The network includes both terrestrial and marine sites ([Marine Protected Areas](#) (MPAs)).

<sup>5</sup>

[http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Reporting/Article\\_17/Documents/ART17%20public%20consultation%20guide.pdf](http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Reporting/Article_17/Documents/ART17%20public%20consultation%20guide.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Article 1(e) of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC<sup>6</sup> provides clear requirements that indicate a 'favourable' status. For more details see page 11.

<b>Indicator 2.111</b>	<b>Conservation action plans</b>
<b>Measurement Unit</b>	Number of action plans
<b>Target Value (2023)</b>	25
<b>Definition</b>	<p>Guidance on Article 17 does not have a clear structure for conservation action plans, however it does cover management plans<sup>7</sup>. Management plans are considered as operational instruments that set practical measures to achieve the conservation objectives for the sites in the network. Action plans are generally associated with management plans and ideally implement the action necessary to achieve the goals set out in management plans.</p> <p>A comprehensive management plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indicate the habitat types and/or species and their localities for which conservation measures are planned;</li> <li>• identify the actual status of the habitat types and species and the desired status which should be reached through the conservation measures;</li> <li>• define clear and achievable conservation objectives; and</li> <li>• identify the necessary measures together with the means and a time schedule which can contribute to meeting those objectives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conservation action plans</b></p> <p>The Action plan should be a document compliant with Article 17 guidance and Natura 2000 plans<sup>8</sup>, the following points should be noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The preference is for conservation action to follow on from sites where conservation plans are developed. It is recognised however that conservation actions can be delivered on sites without management plans provided they will still deliver an improvement in condition.</li> <li>○ The output indicator relates to the improvement in the qualifying interest e.g. a site is 100ha and of that it supports 75ha of qualifying feature e.g. 75ha of lowland raised bog with associated 25ha of other habitat such as wet woodland. The output indicator would be 75ha in this case.</li> <li>○ Plans can also include works on land not directly supporting a qualifying interest but would deliver improvement in condition that would then be eligible e.g. fencing or drain blocking would improve grazing or water levels across a site and therefore bring whole site improvements</li> <li>○ Habitat mapping – Any mapping must fit in with EU requirements, namely EUNIS.</li> </ul>
<b>Achievement</b>	Plans should be developed and actions agreed by SEUPB before the plan can be confirmed as contributing to the output indicator. Any implementation activities detailed in the application will also be utilised for monitoring success with regard to implementation.

<sup>7</sup> <https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/d/.../Art17%20-%20Guidelines-final.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm)