



Knowledge & Learning Mechanism  
on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services

Developing a mechanism  
for supporting better  
decisions on our  
environment  
based on the best  
available knowledge.

***EKLIPSE is a European Mechanism to answer requests from policy makers and other societal actors on biodiversity related issues.***

More information on the processes and the EKLIPSE project funded by the EU in H2020 is available at  
[www.eclipse-mechanism.eu](http://www.eclipse-mechanism.eu)

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of existing approaches that environmental regulators can use to enhance environmental sustainability and improve outcomes for biodiversity of business operations, with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises in the food and drink sector of Europe?**

### General Information

This question was proposed by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). To support SEPA in developing its new regulatory framework, this research will help the agency by identifying and evaluating approaches/mechanisms and incentives for regulating businesses in a way which delivers for biodiversity, and the ecosystem functions both people and biodiversity are dependent upon.

As a response to several virtual meetings with the requester as well as building on feedback from stakeholders, the request has been further refined and structured by the following sub questions:

1. What approaches can environmental regulators use to improve biodiversity outcomes of businesses?
2. How do we know these approaches work / are effective in improving biodiversity outcomes?
3. Which of these approaches work well under which conditions?
  - a) conditions related to the national policy and legal context
  - b) conditions related to corporate culture and mental mind-set

From a stakeholder perspective this means responding to two expectations: first, showing that these approaches worked and how, and second, to point out the added value compared to business as usual.

## Context and justification

Government organisations and regulators have a key role in helping businesses operate in a more sustainable, yet still competitive, manner. SEPA is working to implement their new regulatory strategy 'One Planet Prosperity', which summarizes the agency's vision for ways they can work with Scottish businesses to enhance environmental sustainability. SEPA would like to find out which approaches they and other European regulatory agencies could use when working with businesses to achieve this vision, from traditional compliance with environmental standards, to going beyond compliance, and encouraging and promoting voluntary participation. It will be very useful to understand and evaluate how effective the various approaches are in changing employee (and customer) behaviour and mind-set and ultimately company culture.

The request focusses on, but is not limited to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food and drink sector, which can have important implications on water/land management. While large multi-national businesses may have the necessary resources and knowledge to comply with environmental regulations, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may require more support in understanding, selecting, and implementing mandatory and voluntary approaches to enhance environmental sustainability. Furthermore, SMEs may be subject to indirect effects and have an impact on the supply chain.

This request aims to review literature, collect case studies and lessons learned to identify available approaches that can help foster environmental sustainability for businesses in general and SMEs in particular, and an analysis of what has worked or not worked from a business perspective, why and how?

### What is the focus of the request?

The aim of the request is to capture the variety of approaches used (or potentially being used) to enhance biodiversity outcomes of businesses, with a view on the different hindering or fostering (context) conditions, factors to success or challenges. While the starting point is on business in general, practical experiences shall be narrowed down for SMEs in the food and drink sector of Europe.

### What is the geographical range?

European level

### What is EKLIPSE?

EKLIPSE is an EU-funded project that started in February 2016. The project aims to establish a robust and flexible long-term mechanism to provide knowledge for policy support on biodiversity and ecosystem services. It aims at communicating and engaging a wide set of knowledge holders to ensure tailor-made results to knowledge requesters and society more broadly.

The success of EKLIPSE and its resulting mechanism is in everyone's hands:

- the 'requesters' from policy and society who need to know what knowledge is out there to answer their policy or societal decision needs;
- the knowledge holders (be they scientists, policy makers or other citizens) who want their knowledge to be useful for decision-making; and
- the networks of people working on biodiversity and ecosystem services who can ensure a good dissemination of the knowledge, recommendations and decisions.

EKLIPSE coordinates innovative and transparent approaches for science, policy and societal actors to jointly provide the best available evidence leading to better informed decision-making.