



8th April 2011

PROJECT GUIDELINES

Guided by the Paris Declaration that initiated the process of the UfM in 2008 and in accordance with the Statutes of the UfM Secretariat, the Senior Officials adopted the following Project Guidelines.

I. PROJECT PROCESSING

Stage 1: Stimulation and Gathering of Potential Project Proposals and Initiatives

In this stage, the Secretariat may proactively gather initiatives for regional, sub-regional, transnational projects (or national projects in the framework of regional strategies or initiatives) from various sources such as sectoral ministerial meetings, national or regional authorities and institutions, private sector and civil society.

The Secretariat will envisage projects that:

- fall within the project priority areas identified by the Heads of State and Government in the Paris Declaration or those covered by the Secretariat's Work Programme;
- are consistent with the Union for the Mediterranean general political and development criteria;
- contribute to the implementation of regional strategies or initiatives.

Stage 2: Registration of Projects

The Secretariat will establish an efficient and transparent system for receiving and registering of project proposals. In order to be registered and accepted for assessment by the Secretariat and be processed, a project submitted should meet three pre-conditions:

- a) it must be presented and duly signed by its promoters;
- b) it must include sufficiently informative description of the main elements of the project ; and
- c) It must include a financial undertaking from the promoters to cover part of the initial development cost (preliminary feasibility study, market research etc.) and participate in funding subsequent implementation costs.



Stage 3: Appraisal and Assessment

If the implementing organization is capable to carry out its own proper assessment of the project proposal, the secretariat only carries out a short plausibility assessment to assure that UfM criteria (see part II) are being met. The plausibility assessments are submitted to the SOM for decision. If the implementing organization is not capable to carry out a proper assessment, the Secretariat will carry out a proper assessment of the project proposal, requesting further information if needed, on the basis of evaluation criteria drawn from general or specific references (see II Project criteria), which may be amended over time, but without applying unduly strict or restrictive criteria, especially since the final responsibility for deciding on the certification of a proposal rests with the SOM. In the case of major projects, the Secretariat may circulate for information to Senior Officials a report summarizing the project initiative under consideration and ask for their guidance before further development.

Stage 4: Labeling of Projects

Following the completion of the project examination and assessment stage, the Secretariat submits to the SOM, on the basis of a collegial decision by the Secretary General and Deputies, the project(s) recommended to be labeled by the UfM. The SOM takes the final decision on the Secretariat's proposal.

Stage 5: Assistance with Promotion of UfM Projects

Once the SOM has endorsed the labeling of a project, the Secretariat works to facilitate the promotion of the project, especially its financing needs, in collaboration and agreement with the project's promoters. This requires contacting funding institutions and banks, whether public or private, by the Secretariat, as well as assisting in the removal of obstacles or impediments.

Stage 6: Monitoring Progress

Once the financing arrangements have been finalised and the project launched, the implementing organizations are responsible to monitor the progress. Progress and status reports will be regularly submitted to the Secretariat. If the implementing organizations are not capable to carry out a proper monitoring process, the Secretariat monitors progress in its implementation, ensuring at the same time that the criteria required for obtaining and keeping the UfM "project label" are being met. Progress and status reports will be regularly submitted to the SOM by the Secretariat.

In certain cases, the Secretariat may follow a fast-track for some projects and omit some of the stages described above if the project has been already approved by Sectoral Ministerial or Senior Officials' meetings.



II. PROJECT CRITERIA

UfM projects are benchmarked against national legislation as well as relevant international standards. Project to be submitted to the Secretariat must:

- a. uphold the principle of sustainable development;
- b. strive to contribute to stability and peace in the whole Euro-Mediterranean region;
- c. not jeopardise the legitimate interest of any member of the UfM;
- d. respect the principles and rules of international law;
- e. take account of the principle of variable geometry; and
- f. respect the decision of member countries involved in an ongoing project when it is subject to further development.

Moreover, project promoters must explicitly show that, where applicable, they have:

- assessed the social and environmental impacts, risks and opportunities of projects;
- entered into effective community engagement through disclosure of project related information and consultation with local communities on matters that directly affect them;
- respected the basic rights of the workers involved in the project through effective human resources management and sound worker-management relationship;
- integrated pollution prevention and control technologies and practices;
- respected the basic human rights and consider the impact they may have including local communities and avoid or minimise the risks and impacts to community health, safety and security that may arise from project activities;
- provided opportunities for development benefits in a culturally appropriate manner;
- properly managed unavoidable involuntary resettlement to mitigate adverse social and economic impacts from land acquisition, or restrictions on affected persons' use of land;
- avoided or mitigated threats to biodiversity arising from their operations as well as sustainably managed renewable natural resources;
- protected cultural heritage from the adverse impacts of the project's activities and support its preservation.
