EU LIFE Programme: Belgian SME seeks port, industrial site or water utility partner for a circular, decentralised and climate-adaptive water treatment project. LIFE-2026-SAP-ENV-ENVIRONMENT - Circular Economy and Zero Pollution

Summary

Profile type

Research & Development Request

Company's country

Belgium

POD reference

RDRBE20260703004

Profile status

PUBLISHED

Type of partnership

Research and development cooperation agreement

Targeted countries

- **Netherlands**
- **Slovakia**
- **Italy**
- **Bulgaria**
- **Romania**
- **Denmark**
- **Germany**
- **Liechtenstein**
- **Estonia**
- **Luxembourg**
- **Malta**
- **France**
- **Latvia**
- **Poland**
- **Iceland**
- **Hungary**
- **Austria**
- **Lithuania**
- **Finland**
- **Greece**
- **Slovenia**
- **Ireland**

- **Cyprus**
- **Czechia**
- **Portugal**
- **Sweden**
- **Spain**
- **Norway**
- **Croatia**
- **Serbia**
- **Moldova**
- **Ukraine**
- **North Macedonia**
- **Montenegro**

Contact Person	Term of validity	Last update
Enrico FRANZIN	**3 Jul 2026** **3 Jul 2027**	**3 Jul 2026**

General Information

Short summary

A Belgian water-tech scale-up specialised in decentralised, circular water and wastewater treatment is preparing a proposal for the EU LIFE programme (Circular Economy and Quality of Life, Water priority). The project will demonstrate modular, AI-enabled, chemical-free treatment and water-reuse technology at a new site within the EU and/or eligible countries. A partner able to host or co-develop the demonstration, such as a port authority, industrial site or public water utility, is sought.

Full description

Water scarcity, ageing network infrastructure and the cost of treatment are growing pressures across the EU, particularly for coastal areas, water-intensive industry and communities outside centralised networks. The applicant is a Belgian scale-up that designs and operates modular, containerised water treatment units for two markets: circular process-water reuse for industry, and decentralised drinking-water production for communities without reliable network access. The technology uses a chemical-free electro-disinfection process, is solar-compatible and off-grid capable, and is monitored remotely through sensors and predictive-maintenance AI-enabled software. It is already installed in over 100 locations across more than ten countries, supplying safe water to over 150,000 people, and is used by industrial clients in food and beverage, chemicals and other water-intensive sectors. The applicant is preparing a proposal under the LIFE programme, sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of Life, topic Circular Economy and Zero Pollution, priority area Water. The project would demonstrate the technology at operational scale in a new EU-based setting, adapted to one of the following contexts: seawater or brackish-water treatment and brine or resource management at a port or coastal industrial site; closed-loop process-water reuse at a water-intensive industrial site or industrial park; or decentralised drinking-water supply for a rural, island or otherwise under-served community. Depending on the host site, the project may also test resource recovery from concentrate streams and further development of the remote monitoring and anomaly-detection system.

Programme: EU LIFE programme, Standard Action Project,
call LIFE-2026-SAP-ENV-ENVIRONMENT (Circular Economy and Zero Pollution).
Full proposal deadline: 22 September 2026, 17:00 Brussels time;
single-stage submission and evaluation.
Indicative project budget: EUR 2-10 million;
Indicative duration: 36-48 months.

Expressions of interest are requested by 31 July 2026, to allow time to prepare the proposal jointly.

A partner is sought to host the demonstration and join the consortium as beneficiary. Expected contributions: a suitable site (port facility, industrial plant/park, or public water infrastructure) with access to the relevant water source; baseline data on current water quality, consumption or discharge; support with permits and site access for the project duration; and a co-financing or in-kind contribution consistent with LIFE rules. Prior experience with EU-funded projects is an advantage but not a requirement. Public bodies, utilities and private companies established in an EU Member State, an EEA country or a country associated with the LIFE programme are all eligible to apply.

Advantages and innovations

The technology removes the need for chemical dosing and its associated storage, transport and handling risks, using an electro-based disinfection process instead. Combined with sensor-based monitoring and AI-predictive maintenance, deployed sites have reported meaningful reductions in both operating costs (lower energy, chemical and maintenance spend) and capital costs (precise process control that avoids over-sizing). The modular, containerised design allows fast deployment, off-grid or on-grid operation, and easy relocation or scaling, supporting both industrial water security and community resilience against drought, flooding or infrastructure disruption. Environmental benefits already documented at deployed sites include lower CO2 emissions from avoiding diesel back-up power and from removing the need to boil water for safety, alongside measurable reductions in freshwater abstraction where process water is reused rather than discharged. For a port, industrial or utility partner, expected benefits include a demonstrated, de-risked route to circular water reuse or decentralised supply, co-funded access to the technology, and a stronger sustainability and resilience profile for the site or service area.

Technical specification or expertise sought

A demonstration site located in an EU Member State, an EEA country or a country associated with the LIFE programme, matching one of the following profiles:
** (1) a port or coastal industrial site with access to seawater, brackish water or industrial effluent, particularly where brine or concentrate management is a concern;
** (2) an industrial site or industrial park with significant process-water consumption seeking to reduce water, energy or resource losses;
** or (3) a public water utility or local authority serving a rural, island or otherwise under-served population.

The site should be able to provide physical space and utility connections for a containerised treatment unit, baseline data on current water source, quality, consumption or discharge, the necessary permits (or support in obtaining them), and staff availability during installation, monitoring and reporting. Experience in environmental monitoring, stakeholder engagement or EU project reporting is welcome but not required.

Stage of development

Already on the market

Sustainable Development goals

- **Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**
- **Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**
- **Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being**
- **Goal 13: Climate Action**
- **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**
- **Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal**
- **Goal 14: Life Below Water**
- **Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

IPR Status

IPR granted

IPR Notes

IPR Notes

Partner Sought

Expected role of the partner

The partner would join the project as beneficiary alongside the applicant, who would act as coordinator. Within the consortium, the partner's role would focus on enabling and supporting the demonstration rather than on the treatment technology itself, which is provided by the applicant.

Expected contributions include: making the chosen site (port facility, industrial plant/park, or public water infrastructure) available for the project duration; granting access for installation, operation and monitoring of the demonstration unit; sharing baseline and operational data (water source, quality, volumes, current costs) needed to design the demonstration and measure its impact; supporting permitting, utility connections and any local stakeholder engagement; and contributing, financially or in kind, to the project budget in line with LIFE co-financing rules. This is open for further discussion with the partner. The partner would also take part in monitoring and reporting over the project lifetime, including data collection against agreed environmental and operational indicators, and would support dissemination of results relevant to its sector, for example through its own communication channels, sector networks, or project events. Continued interest in operating or maintaining the installation after the project ends, directly or through a service arrangement, would support the case for long-term sustainability of the results, which is an evaluation criterion under the LIFE programme.

Both public bodies (port authorities, municipalities, water utilities) and private companies (industrial site or park operators) are welcome to express interest. Prior experience with EU grant-funded projects is an advantage but not a prerequisite; guidance on the administrative and reporting aspects would be provided by the applicant as coordinator.

Type of partnership

Research and development cooperation agreement

Type and size of the partner

- **SME 11-49**
- **R&D Institution**
- **SME 50 - 249**
- **Big company**
- **Other**

Call Details

Framework program

Environment (including Climate Change)

Call title and identifier

EU LIFE programme - Environment and Climate Action, sub-programme Circular Economy and Quality of Life

LIFE-2026-SAP-ENV-ENVIRONMENT - Circular Economy and Zero Pollution (Standard Action Projects), priority area: Water

Submission and evaluation scheme

Single-stage submission, one-step evaluation (full proposal). Award criteria: Relevance, Impact, Quality, Resources (0-20 points each, weighted); minimum score required in each.

Anticipated project budget

Coordinator required

No

Deadline for EoI

31 Jul 2026

Deadline of the call

22 Sep 2026

Project duration in weeks

Web link to the call

https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/funding-opportunities/calls-proposals/standard-action-projects-saps-circular-economy-and-zero-pollution-environment-0_en

Project title and acronym

Dissemination

Technology keywords

- **01003023 - Environmental and Biometrics Sensors, Actuators**
- **01003025 - Internet of Things**
- **01003024 - Cloud Technologies**
- **05004001 - Filtration and Membrane Processes**
- **01003003 - Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Market keywords

- **08002002 - Industrial measurement and sensing equipment**
- **08002003 - Process control equipment and systems**
- **08004003 - Water treatment equipment and waste disposal systems**
- **08002001 - Energy management**

Targeted countries

- **Netherlands**
- **Slovakia**
- **Italy**
- **Bulgaria**
- **Romania**
- **Denmark**
- **Germany**
- **Liechtenstein**
- **Estonia**
- **Luxembourg**
- **Malta**
- **France**
- **Latvia**
- **Poland**
- **Iceland**
- **Hungary**
- **Austria**
- **Lithuania**
- **Finland**
- **Greece**
- **Slovenia**
- **Ireland**
- **Cyprus**
- **Czechia**
- **Portugal**
- **Sweden**
- **Spain**
- **Norway**
- **Croatia**
- **Serbia**
- **Moldova**
- **Ukraine**

Sector groups involved

- **Energy-Intensive Industries**
- **Mobility - Transport - Automotive**
- **Energy-Intensive Industries - Materials**
- **Renewable Energy**
- **Energy-Intensive Industries - BioChemTech**

- **North Macedonia**
- **Montenegro**