

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO ACT AS AN ADVISOR TO THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC ASSET DEVELOPMENT FUND SA (“HRADF”) TO PREPARE A WELL INTEGRITY REPORT IN RELATION TO THE UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS STORAGE (“UGS”) FACILITY IN SOUTH KAVALA**

*Athens, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

**1. Introduction**

**1.1. Pursuant to:**

- i. the provisions of the single article of Law 3985/2011 “Medium Term Fiscal Strategy Framework 2012- 2015” (Government Gazette A’/151/2011), which approved the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy Framework 2012-2015 and the “Privatisation Programme 2011-2015” (Chapter B’, Part II “Privatisations”);
- ii. the provisions of Law 3986/2011 on “Emergency Implementation Measures for the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy Framework 2012-2015” (Government Gazette A’/152/2011), by virtue of which the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund SA (“**HRADF**” or the “**Fund**”) was established with the sole object of developing assets of the Hellenic Republic, which are included in the Privatisation Programme;
- iii. the provisions of Law 4046/2012 (Government Gazette A’/28/2012) “Approval of the Draft Agreements for Financial Assistance Facility between the EFSF, the Hellenic Republic and the Bank of Greece, of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Hellenic Republic, the European Commission and the Bank of Greece and other provisions for the reduction of the public debt and the salvage of the national economy”, which updated the Privatisation Programme included in Annex IV;
- iv. the provisions of paragraph 4.4 (Structural Policies for the enhancement of competitiveness and development - Privatisation) of Law 4336/2015 (Government Gazette A’/94/2015) “Ratification of the draft agreement for the Financial Support from the European Stability Mechanism and provisions for the implementation of the Financing Agreement”;
- v. the decision no 195/27.10.2011 of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Asset Restructuring and Privatisations S.A. (“ICARP”) of the Hellenic Republic (Government

- Gazette B'/2501/2011), by virtue of which HRADF acquired the right to grant to third parties the concession right to use, develop and exploit the underground natural space of the almost depleted offshore natural gas field of South Kavala for the purposes of conversion thereof into the first Underground Gas Storage ("**UGS**") facility in Greece;
- vi. the provisions of the updated Asset Development Plan of the HRADF, as approved by the Board of Directors of the HRADF on September 30th, 2019 and endorsed by means of a relevant decision by the Government's Council for Economic Affairs and Policy on November 12th, 2019;
  - vii. the provisions of the Joint Ministerial Decision No ΥΠΕΝ/ΔΥΔΠ/26579/675 of the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Deputy Minister of Environment & Energy dated March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (Government Gazette B'/847/2020), defining the process and the conditions for granting the use, development and exploitation of the State – owned underground natural space resulting from the almost depleted natural gas field of "S. Kavala", for its conversion into a natural gas storage facility in accordance with article 93 of Law 4001/2011, as in force (the "**Joint Ministerial Decision**");
  - viii. the provisions of the Procurement Regulation of HRADF (hereinafter referred to as the "**Procurement Regulation**") as amended and codified by the Decision No 2/16128/0025 of the Minister of Finance (Government Gazette B'/476/2014)

The Asset Development Plan of HRADF, as approved, foresees the development and exploitation of the first Underground Gas Storage ("**UGS**") facility in Greece in the almost depleted offshore natural gas field of South Kavala, located approximately 11km offshore in the Gulf of Kavala in a water depth of 58m, which shall be linked to shore based facilities and a national pipeline network approximately 2km from the gas line landfall (the "**Project**").

The South Kavala gas field was discovered in 1972 by South Kavala 1 (SK-1and 1ST) wells and appraised by the wells South Kavala 2 (SK-2), South Kavala 3 (SK-3) and South Kavala 5 (SK-5) and developed by the wells South Kavala 3A (SK-3A), South Kavala 3B (SK-3B) and South Kavala 4 (SK-4) from 1973 to 1980. The field structure is simple faulted anticline defined by 2D and 3D seismic with a surface area of about 4.5 km<sup>2</sup> within which the reservoir demonstrates stratigraphic pinch-out towards the southwest. The reservoir is comprised of turbiditic sands within a 50 m interval encased by Miocene anhydrite/salt sequences. The unmanned and

remotely operated Kappa (K) platform was installed to accommodate drilling and production facilities. Production started in March 1981 from the two production wells and peaked during 1989. Originally gas was utilised for local power generation and nearby fertilizer production and production has continued intermittently through to present day for power generation to support petroleum production activities.

The UGS is intended to serve as energy infrastructure that will enhance the security of gas supply in the Greek market and improve the management of natural gas suppliers' portfolios. The Project is intended to decisively contribute to the optimisation of gas supply operations (maximise Greece's potential to serve as an energy hub) and enhance the energy security of the gas market by providing security of supply at both national and European level to the benefit of the end consumers. It is noted that the Project is included in the list of Projects of Common Interest - European Commission (PCI) adopted on 17 October 2017 by the European Commission and the Member States in the PCI Regional Group Meeting (PCI 6.20.3 South Kavala Underground Storage (UGS) facility).

1.2. Within this framework, HRADF is seeking, through a tender process held under the rules of this Request for Proposals (the **"Tender"**), to appoint a leading highly specialised and experienced firm (the **"Advisor"**) to carry out an assessment of well integrity in Kappa (K) platform and prepare and submit to HRADF a well integrity report (the **"Report"** and together with any other deliverables the **"Deliverables"**) with a view to support and contribute to the conversion of the almost depleted offshore natural gas field of South Kavala into a UGS.

1.3. The assignment is funded by the European Commission under the Connecting Europe Facility Programme (Action Number 6.20.3-0016-EL-S-M-19 "Underground natural gas storage facilities in South Kavala (UGS) technical study") which is managed by Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (**"INEA"** or the **"Agency"**).

## 2. Scope of Work –Deliverables

The Advisor shall provide an assessment of the well integrity in Kappa (K) platform by

reviewing the available well data, completions and interpretations integrated with recommended mitigation strategies and quantified risk analyses.

Following his assessment, the Advisor shall submit to HRADF the Report and any other Deliverables.

### **3. Duration and Budget**

**3.1. Duration.** The duration of the engagement shall be six (6) months, as of the signing of the relevant contract with the Advisor. The duration of the engagement may be extended in accordance with the Procurement Regulation of the Fund, if such extension is deemed necessary by HRADF.

**3.2. Budget.** The maximum available budget for the assignment is and fifty five thousand Euro (€ 55.000,00) (excluding VAT). The available budget includes any and all required expenses to complete the assignment. The kind of expenses and their settlement shall have to comply with the Project Expenses Policy of HRADF (Annex I).

### **4. Qualification and Criteria**

The Interested Parties should be able to demonstrate their standing and professional experience in relation to the assignment tendered. In particular, the Proposals of the Interested Parties are required to include the following:

**4.1. Track Record & Experience:** Relevant experience and proven track record of the Interested Party's in petroleum engineering, completion/drilling engineering and geoscience. Experience in gas storage projects shall be highly evaluated. Interested Parties are strongly recommended to have expertise in sustainability. The Proposal must include a catalogue of all the relevant projects and assignments performed by the Interested Party in the last ten (10) years (**DOSSIER A'**).

**4.2. Project Team:** Proposed team composition (and its proposed structure) including relevant experience of the senior members of the team in similar assignments during the last ten (10) years. The project team shall include geoscientists, petroleum engineers and completion/drilling engineers. The suggested senior members of the project team may be replaced only with HRADF's prior written consent (**DOSSIER B'**).

**4.3. Methodological Approach:** Initial understanding on the requirements and Deliverables of the assignment, including an indicative timetable for its implementation.

Interested Parties must have license for industry standard software. (**DOSSIER C'**).

**4.4. Financial Offer:** The Proposal must include a detailed fee analysis and structure for the performance of the assignment, including expenses at capped amount. The kind of expenses and their settlement shall have to comply with the Project Expenses Policy of HRADF (**DOSSIER D'**).

**4.5.** The Interested Parties must declare in writing that they and each member of the proposed project team do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the Tender and the Project at the time of submission of the Proposal. Such a declaration confirming the absence of any conflict of interest shall be in effect throughout the term of the engagement of the Advisor with HRADF.

**4.6.** The Interested Parties must meet all the qualifications as described above under 4.1 through 4.5. Interested Parties, who fail to submit their Proposal fully compliant to the qualifications required under 4.1 through 4.6 of this Request for Proposals, shall be disqualified from the Tender.

**4.7.** The Advisor must observe and abide by the rules provided for in art. 7 of the Law 3049/2002 and particularly their professional code of conduct and relevant confidentiality rules even after the conclusion of their engagement.

## **5. Selection Process**

**5.1.** The assignment will be awarded in accordance with the provisions of the Law 3986/2011 and article 2.3 of the Procurement Regulation, as currently in force.

**5.2.** HRADF will evaluate the Proposals submitted according to the criteria set out in Section 4 and in accordance with the table below. The assignment will be awarded to the Interested Party with the highest score (the "**Preferred Bidder**"). HRADF has the right to appoint the Interested Party with the second highest score as substitute of the Preferred Bidder (the "**Substitute Preferred Bidder**").

**5.3.** The Proposals of the Interested Parties are evaluated on the basis of the following criteria and their respective weighting.



| Criterion                              | Weighting |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|
| Track Record & Experience – Dossier A' | [30] %    |
| Project Team– Dossier B'               | [25] %    |
| Methodological Approach – Dossier C'   | [15] %    |
| Financial Offer – Dossier D'           | [30] %    |

5.4. HRADF may require additional documents and/or clarifications, information, additions or adjustments from the Interested Parties in connection with any issue related to their Proposals. The Interested Parties may be also requested to present their approach for the assignment following the submission of their Proposals.

5.5. The Proposals, consisting of Dossiers A', B', C' and D', the declarations confirming the absence of any conflict of interest and any other supporting documentation relating thereto and/or proving the required experience and expertise of the Interested Parties as well as of the individual members of their proposed team, are permissibly submitted:

- i. either electronically, by e-mail to the e-mail address: [tender@hraf.gr](mailto:tender@hraf.gr) (for the attention of Ms. Chrysoula Rallia), marked “UGS SOUTH KAVALA: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO ACT AS ADVISOR FOR THE PREPARATION OF WELL INTEGRITY REPORT”. Please note that the maximum size of the e-mail should not exceed 8MB, the attached files should not be compressed (.zip) and their names should not exceed 20 characters;
- ii. or by uploading the files to a secure electronic file to be created by the Fund, upon request by the Interested Party and notification of the Interested Party's e-mail address to: [tender@hraf.gr](mailto:tender@hraf.gr) (for the attention of Ms. Chrysoula Rallia) up to 48 hours prior to the deadline for the submission of Proposals, in order for the latter to be sent the instructions and passwords for uploading the tender material (maximum overall file size 15GB).

5.6. Dossier D' must be protected with a password; if not, the Interested Party shall be forthwith disqualified. Following the assessment of Dossiers A', B', C' and provided that the declarations confirming the absence of any conflict of interest have been submitted in compliance with paragraph 4.5 hereof, **only** the Interested Parties complying with the requirements under Section 4 (regarding Dossier A', B' and C') will be invited via e-mail to send the password for Dossier D'. The Interested Parties who fail to comply with the above

requirements will be notified accordingly. Following the assessment of Dossiers D', the Interested Parties (invited to send the password for Dossier D') will be notified about the outcome of the process.

**5.7.** The Proposals must be submitted electronically by no later than **June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 14:00, Athens time**. Proposals submitted after the aforementioned deadline shall be deemed inadmissible and thus immediately rejected and shall not be evaluated.

**5.8.** The Fund reserves fully the right to enter into discussions and negotiations with the Preferred Bidder to improve its financial offer, prior to the final award of the assignment.

**5.9.** The award of the assignment is subject to the conclusion of a written contract. In case the Preferred Bidder fails to agree with HRADF on the terms and conditions of the contract within reasonable time, HRADF reserves the right, at its exclusive discretion, to nominate as Preferred Bidder and award the Tender to the Substitute Preferred Bidder. In such a case, and for the avoidance of doubt paragraph 5.9 of this Request for Proposals shall apply.

**5.10.** The contract to be concluded between HRADF and the Advisor (the "**Contract**") shall include, at least, the terms stated below. It is further noted that the Advisor shall be bound by the General Conditions of the CEF Energy Sector general model agreement (April 2017 update), attached hereto as **Annex II**, as applicable to the Advisor. Terms and conditions of the Contract shall always be construed in a manner so as to make possible and effective towards the Advisor the exercise of the rights of HRADF and/or the Agency pursuant to the General Conditions of Annex II and as applicable to the Advisor.

**a. Liability**

Except in cases of force majeure, the Advisor shall compensate HRADF for any damage sustained by it as a result of the implementation of the Contract or because the assignment was not implemented in full compliance with the Contract.

The Advisor shall be liable for any fault, whether by intent or negligence of any kind, in connection with or arising out of the Contract or any addition or variation thereto. The Advisor shall also be liable for any damage caused to third parties as a consequence of the Contract and/or during the assignment.

The Advisor does not acquire any right towards HRADF and/or the Agency and/or their officers, agents and/or employees and/or advisers, any right or claim for compensation, or indemnification, or other, for any reason or cause related to the Contract.

In case of a consortium, all members of the consortium, shall be jointly and severally liable under the Contract.

**b. Conflict of Interest**

The Advisor shall take all necessary measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional life or any other shared interest with HRADF and/or the Agency, or any third party related to the subject matter of the Contract.

Any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests during the implementation of the Contract shall be notified to HRADF and the Agency, in writing, without delay. The Advisor shall immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. HRADF reserves the right to verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken within a specified deadline.

**c. Confidentiality**

The Advisor shall preserve the confidentiality of any information and documents, in any form, which are disclosed in writing or orally in relation to the implementation of the Contract and which are explicitly indicated in writing as confidential, with the exception of information that is publicly available.

The Advisor shall not use confidential information and documents for any reason other than fulfilling their obligations under the Contract, unless otherwise agreed with the other party in writing.

The Advisor shall be bound by the confidentiality obligations hereby during the implementation of the Contract and for a period of five (5) years starting from the final payment made, unless:

- (i) the party concerned agrees to release the other party from the confidentiality obligations earlier;
- (ii) the confidential information or documents become public through other means than a breach of the confidentiality obligations;
- (iii) the disclosure of the confidential information or documents is required by law.

**d. Pre-existing rights and ownership and use of the Reports and Deliverables  
(including intellectual and industrial property rights)**

*(i) Ownership of the Reports*

Unless stipulated otherwise in the Contract, ownership of the results of the Contract (including but not limited to Reports and/or other Deliverables) including industrial and intellectual property rights, and of other documents relating to it, shall be vested in HRADF.

*(ii) Pre-existing rights*

Pre-existing material is any materials, document, technology or know-how which exists prior to the Advisor using it for the production of a result in the implementation of the Contract. Pre-existing right is any industrial and intellectual property right on pre-existing material; it may consist in a right of ownership, a licence right and/or a right of use belonging to the beneficiary or any other third parties.

If HRADF sends the Advisor a written request specifying which of the results (including but not limited to Reports and/or other Deliverables) it intends to use, the Advisor must establish a list specifying all pre-existing rights included in those results and provide this list to HRADF. The Advisor shall ensure that it or its affiliated entities have all the rights to use any pre-existing rights during the assignment and the implementation of the Contract.

*(iii) Rights of use of the results and of pre-existing rights by HRADF*

The Advisor grants to HRADF the following rights to use the results of the Contract (including, but not limited to Reports and/or other Deliverables):

(a) for its own purposes, and in particular, to make available to persons working for HRADF the Agency, Union institutions, other Union agencies and bodies and to EU Member States' institutions, as well as to copy and reproduce in whole or in part and in an unlimited number of copies;

(b) reproduction: the right to authorise direct or indirect, temporary or permanent reproduction of the results by any means (mechanical, digital or other) and in any form, in whole or in part;

(c) communication to the public: the right to authorise any display performance or communication to the public, by wire or wireless means, including making the results available to the public in such a way that members of the public may access them from a place and at a time individually chosen by them; this right also includes communication and broadcasting by cable or by satellite;

(d) distribution: the right to authorise any form of distribution of results or copies of the results to the public;

(e) adaptation: the right to modify the results;

(f) translation;

(g) the right to store and archive the results in line with the document management rules applicable to HRADF and/or the Agency, including digitalisation or converting the format for preservation or new use purposes;

(h) where the results are documents, the right to authorise the reuse of the documents in conformity with Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents if that Decision is applicable and if the documents fall within its scope and are not excluded by any of its provisions. For the sake of this provision, the terms 'reuse' and 'document' have the meanings given to them by Decision 2011/833/EU.

Additional rights of use for the HRADF and/or the Agency may be provided for in the Contract. The Advisor shall warrant that HRADF has the right to use any pre-existing rights, which have been included in the results of the action. Unless specified otherwise in the Contract, those pre-existing rights shall be used for the same purposes and under the same conditions applicable to the rights of use of the results (including but not limited to Reports and/or other Deliverables) of the assignment.

Information about the copyright owner shall be inserted when the result of the assignment (including but not limited to Reports and/or other Deliverables) is divulged by HRADF and/or the Agency.

The copyright information shall read: "© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licenced to the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency under conditions.".

If the beneficiaries grant rights of use to HRADF and/or the Agency, this does not affect their confidentiality obligations.

#### **e. Payment**

HRADF shall pay all fees and expenses to the Advisor within a period to be specified in the Contract following the date of submission of detailed invoices and or copies of appropriate corresponding evidence and/or any other document required by the accounting services of HRADF in accordance with applicable law. All payments under the Contract are exclusive of VAT. Any withholding or deduction of any tax, assessment or other central or local

government charge of any nature shall be made in accordance with applicable law. Expenses are payable according to HRADF Expenses Policy (Annex I), as applicable from time to time.

**f. Assignment**

The Advisor may not assign and/or transfer any of its rights, claims and/or obligations under the Contract and may not be substituted in the performance of the Contract by any affiliate thereof or any third party.

**g. Suspension & Termination**

*Suspension of the Contract*

HRADF reserves the right, at the fullest extent possible and at its exclusive discretion, to suspend the provision of the Advisor's services under the Contract (before its termination), upon prior written notice to the Advisor as will be specified in the Contract. In such case of suspension, the Contract will be extended for a time period equal to the time period of the suspension.

*Termination of the Contract.*

The Contract shall terminate upon expiry of the duration specified in the Contract (and the relevant Request for Proposal).

HRADF reserves the right to terminate the Contract with or without cause upon written notice to the Advisor with immediate effect.

The Advisor may terminate the Contract only with cause upon prior written notice to HRADF as will be specified in the Contract.

**h. Checks, Audits and Evaluation**

The Advisor accepts and agrees that the Agency, the Commission, the European AntiFraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may exercise their rights under Article 27 of Annex II of this Request for Proposals also towards the Advisor.

**i. Governing law**

The Contract and any non-contractual matters or obligations arising under, out of or in connection with the Contract shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Hellenic Republic.

**j. Jurisdiction**

The courts of Athens, Greece shall have exclusive jurisdiction in relation to any claim, dispute or difference concerning the Contract and any matter arising from, under or in connection with the Contract.

The parties irrevocably waive any right they may have to object to any action being brought in those courts, to claim that the action has been brought to an inconvenient forum or to claim that those courts do not have jurisdiction.

**k. Miscellaneous**

*Whole Agreement*

Unless otherwise explicitly provided in the Contract, the Contract shall constitute the entire agreement between HRADF and the Advisor and shall supersede any and all prior agreements, understandings and/or representations with respect to the engagement, except for any other confidentiality agreements previously delivered, as they may be modified or supplemented by provisions of the Contract.

*Validity of Contract terms*

If any provision of the Contract is held to be invalid, in whole or in part, such provision shall be deemed not to form part of the Contract. In any event, the enforceability of the remainder of the Contract will not be affected, unless such deletion substantially affects or alters the contractual basis of the Contract as provided by the governing law.

**6. Tender Terms and Conditions**

**6.1.** The participation in the Tender entails the full and unconditional acceptance of the rules of the Tender and of this Request for Proposals by the candidates. Accordingly, any conditional offers and/or any terms and conditions contained in the Proposals which are not in compliance with this Request for Proposals shall not be taken into consideration and shall not bind HRADF in any way whatsoever, either in the course of the Tender or thereafter.

**6.2.** This Request for Proposals and the Tender Process are governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Hellenic Republic, taking also into consideration the prevailing market conditions, the practice of HRADF and its internal policy, including terms and conditions customary in the circumstances.

**6.3.** HRADF and/or the Agency and/or any of their advisers, and/or agents, and/or employees, and/or officers are not to be held responsible or liable in respect of any error or

misstatement/misrepresentation in, or omission in this Request for Proposals. No person acquires against HRADF, the Hellenic Corporation of Assets and Participations (HCAP) and/or the Agency and/or their officers, agents and/or employees and/or advisers, any right or claim for compensation, or indemnification, or other, for any reason or cause related to this Request for Proposals and/or the Proposal and/or the participation in the Tender. No representation, warranty or undertaking, expressed or implied, is, or will be made, in relation to the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of this Request for Proposals and the Tender Process in general.

**6.4.** This Request of Proposal reflects only HRADF's view and position. The Agency and/or any of its officers, agents and/or employees and/or advisers are not responsible for any information contained in this Request for Proposals or for any use of such information.

**6.5.** The Fund reserves the right, according to the Regulation, to extend and/or amend the engagement with the Advisor in order to include complementary services which may be required and cannot be identified today, but which shall prove to be inseparable from the original engagement, or which may be absolutely necessary for the completion of the assignment.

**6.6.** HRADF reserves the right, at the fullest extent possible and at its exclusive discretion, to cancel, suspend, amend or postpone this procedure, without any prior notice or update, as well as to terminate any negotiations or discussions at any stage of the process, without incurring any liability whatsoever as against any participant and/or any third party.

**6.7.** Any dispute arising under, or out of, or in connection with, the present Request for Proposals including the Proposals submitted shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Athens, Greece.

**6.8.** Confidentiality- Data Protection: The Fund shall treat all information submitted by the Interested Parties during the Tender as strictly confidential. All information shall be used strictly for the purposes of evaluation of the Proposals and the Fund shall endeavour to take all necessary measures to ensure their confidentiality.

**6.9.** The Fund acts as data controller regarding personal data of individuals which are collected in the context of the Tender (indicatively as per Qualification & Criteria of section 4 in this Request for Proposals) and the processing of said data is to be conducted pursuant to the legislation regarding the protection of personal data, especially the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection

of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) as well as with the Greek Law 4624/2019, as in force.

**6.10.** The purpose of processing of personal data as per paragraph 6.8 is the implementation of the Tender, the evaluation of Proposals submitted by Interested Parties, as well as of the Contract, and their monitoring, the safeguarding of the Fund's rights and the security and protection of transactions in general, the fulfillment of the Fund's legal obligations, the prevention of fraud against the Fund, as well as informing Interested Parties with regard to the evaluation of their submitted Proposals.

**6.11.** Said personal data may be shared with the Hellenic Corporation of Assets and Participations (HCAP), public entities and judicial authorities within their competence.

**6.12.** The personal data collected and processed in the context of the Tender may be retained for a period starting from the date of their receipt and lasting: (a) for 10 years in case no Contract is concluded (b) for 20 years in case a Contract is signed. After the expiration of the above periods the personal data will be properly destroyed.

**6.13.** Pursuant to the General Data Protection Regulation, natural persons have the following rights regarding the processing of their personal data: (a) access and information, (b) correction, (c) deletion, (d) limitation of processing, (f) opposition to the processing of their personal data, including opposition to automated decision making and profiling, and (g) data portability. For the enforcement of said rights or any other related enquiry, persons concerned may address the Fund in writing (e-mail: [dpo@hraf.gr](mailto:dpo@hraf.gr)). The Fund shall take every possible measure to satisfy data subject's requests within reasonable time and not later than one (1) month at most, which may be extended by two (2) more months at most if the request is complex or there is a large number of requests, informing the data subject of such delay within one (1) month from receipt of the request. The Fund has the right to reject the request for erasure of any natural person's data, if their retention is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation, for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest, for archiving purposes in the public interest, or for the establishment, exercise or defense of legal claims or third-party claims. The enforcement of said rights does not relieve Interested Parties from their obligations deriving from their participation in the Tender.

**6.14.** All Interested Parties shall comply with the existing national and European legal and regulatory framework with respect to the protection of personal data and shall take all



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necessary technical and organizational measures to ensure that the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation are met. More specifically, the Interested Parties declare that they have established the legal basis for the transfer and provision of all personal data provided to the Fund in the context of the Tender and that they have properly informed all natural persons, whose personal data are being provided to the Fund, in accordance with the requirements of the national and EU legislation on personal data protection.

## **ANNEX I**

### **POLICY ON CONSULTANT EXPENSES**

#### **1. Objective & Scope**

The following policy pertains to charges by consultants involved in asset development projects and specifically covers the following:

- (A) travel expenses,
- (B) miscellaneous charges, such as costs for printing and photocopying services, teleconferencing.

#### **2. To whom does this pertain?**

This policy and procedure pertain to consultants involved in HRADF property development projects.

#### **3. Travel Expense Coverage Policy:**

Travel expenses

1. Only expenses related to consultant travel away from headquarters and that pertain to the development project shall be covered. Expenses incurred within headquarters, for example travel costs and meal costs, shall not be covered.

2. The following cases shall be covered:

(A) Consultants based abroad:

- (i) air travel from/to the consultant's headquarters, as well as domestic air travel, or travel via a different means, as well as living expenses within Greece, when the consultant travels to Greece for the purposes of the project,
- (ii) air travel from/to the consultant's headquarters, domestic air travel or travel via a different means within the country of destination, as well as living expenses, when the consultant travels abroad for the purposes of the project.

(B) Consultants based in Greece:

(i) domestic air travel or travel via a different means as well as living expenses at the destination, when travelling domestically for the purposes of the project,

(ii) air travel abroad with return, as well as living expenses at the destination, when traveling abroad for the purposes of the project.

3. Two alternative methods exist for covering consultant travel expenses:

(A) re-invoicing of travel expenses, and submission of the relevant documents,

(B) payment of a daily allowance and compensation per trip made by the consultant. Also in this case, the sum paid by HRADF will be considered extra remuneration paid to the consultant.

4. The following table describes the respective caps, which will be taken into account for calculating the budget when concluding contracts, multiplied by the number of estimated man days. The following caps will be taken into account for calculating the daily allowance and for calculating the air travel allowance, whenever this is required. For contracts already concluded, the following shall be taken into account for approval of the costs that have been paid within the context of contracts, and which are already in progress.

| Type of Service per case          | A.i AND B.i   | A.ii AND B.ii |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Air travel</b>                 | Economy Class | Economy Class |
| <b>Sojourn</b>                    | €130          | €180          |
| <b>Daily Subsistence Expenses</b> | €50           | €75           |

In cases where air travel is carried out via business class for reasons of counterparty policy, the maximum reimbursement rates per destination are provided in the Table in Annex 1. Cases of travel from destinations not included in the above table shall be decided upon on a case by case basis. Cases in which air travel is carried out via business class for reasons of proven force majeure shall be exempt from the policy described above and shall be decided upon on a case by case basis.

5. Expenses considered daily living expenses that shall be covered by HRADF include:
- (A) meal costs, and
- (B) travel expenses via public transport or taxi if there is no other means of transport in the city/destination.
6. In the event that the demands of the project require the use of a vehicle, then a kilometric allowance equal to €0.15 per kilometer shall be recognized. In order to cover the cost of car rentals, the authorisation of the Project Manager and the Executive Director or the CEO shall be required
7. New contracts shall provide for the following:
- a) the aforementioned caps, which must be agreed upon prior to conclusion of the contract and referred to in the relevant paragraph;
- b) the total budget for trips and living expenses, which shall include travel expenses;
- c) the method of handling costs, either through re-invoicing of costs or payment of a daily allowance as well as compensation agreed upon per trip.
8. HRADF will not cover costs and living expenses beyond the caps which have been agreed upon. Exceeding of these caps shall not be covered by HRADF, without prior notification and approval by the Project Manager and the Executive Director or the CEO.

#### **4. Travel Expense Payment Procedure**

1. In order for HRADF to proceed with payment of the above expenses, the following shall be required:
- a) submission of documents, namely copies of the invoices-expenses being re-invoiced, which must accompany the corresponding invoice;
- b) a Sworn Declaration on the part of the consultant's legal representative, that the related expenses have not also been invoiced to another customer/another project of the consultant;
- and

c) the approval of the Project Manager, who shall monitor compliance with the above caps as well as the appropriateness of the relevant travel expenses, i.e. the extent to which these were necessary for execution of the project by the consultants.

2. Travel expenses shall be accepted only if the corresponding documents have been issued in the name of the staff member or company re-invoicing the cost to HRADF. If this is not the case, they shall not be covered by HRADF.

3. Furthermore, the consultants must plan their trips in conjunction with the project manager so as to avoid incurring additional costs for last minute travel.

4. The expenses shall be paid one month from the date of invoicing, provided that no issues arise during auditing.

#### **5. Policy for Coverage of Miscellaneous Expenses**

1. Miscellaneous expenses mainly include the cost of printing and photocopying services, teleconferencing, and other costs required to cover the specific demands of the project. Mobile phone costs and other telephone costs shall not be covered.

2. Expenses for Printing and photocopying incurred from the use of own resources on the part of the consultant shall not be covered, except if, for the purposes of the project, the provision of services by a third party were required.

3. In every case, it is necessary for it to be clear from the third-party invoices submitted by the consultants that such costs pertain to the specific development projects. Invoices issued by the consultant and not accompanied by documents from third parties, in accordance with the above, shall not be accepted.

4. In order for HRADF to proceed with payment of miscellaneous expenses, the approval of the Project Manager is required, who shall monitor the appropriateness of the miscellaneous expenses; in other words, whether these were necessary for execution of the consultants' project.

## ANNEX II

### CEF ENERGY SECTOR GENERAL CONDITIONS

General Conditions of the CEF Energy Sector general model agreement (April 2017 update), can be also found in the following address:

[https://ec.europa.eu/inea/sites/inea/files/cef\\_model\\_ga\\_2017\\_update\\_ener\\_for\\_publication\\_2.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/inea/sites/inea/files/cef_model_ga_2017_update_ener_for_publication_2.pdf)

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## PART A – LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

### ARTICLE II.1 – GENERAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE BENEFICIARY

The beneficiary shall:

- (a) be responsible for carrying out the action in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement;
- (b) be responsible for complying with any legal obligations incumbent on it under applicable EU, international and national law;
- (c) inform the Agency immediately of any events or circumstances likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action of which the beneficiary is aware;
- (d) inform the Agency immediately of any change in its legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation or of its affiliated entities and of any change in its name, address or legal representative or of its affiliated entities.

### ARTICLE II.2 – COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES

#### II.2.1 Form and means of communications

Any communication relating to the Agreement or to its implementation shall be made in writing (in paper or electronic form), shall bear the number of the Agreement and shall be made using the communication details identified in Article 6.

Electronic communications shall be confirmed by an original signed paper version of that communication if requested by any of the parties provided that this request is submitted without unjustified delay. The sender shall send the original signed paper version without unjustified delay.

Formal notifications shall be made by registered mail with return receipt or equivalent, or by electronic mail, which provides the sender with compelling evidence that the message was delivered to the specified recipient.

#### II.2.2 Date of communications

Any communication is deemed to have been made when it is received by the receiving party, unless the agreement refers to the date when the communication was sent.

Electronic communication is deemed to have been received by the receiving party on the day of successful dispatch of that communication, provided that it is sent to the addressees listed in Article 6. Dispatch shall be deemed unsuccessful if the sending party receives a message of non-delivery. In this case, the sending party shall immediately send again such communication to any of the other addresses listed in Article 6. In case of unsuccessful dispatch, the sending party shall not be held in breach of its obligation to send such communication within a specified deadline.

Mail sent to the Agency using the postal services is considered to have been received by the Agency on the date on which it is registered by the department identified in Article 6.2.

Formal notifications made by registered mail with return receipt or equivalent, or by equivalent electronic means, shall be considered to have been received by the receiving party on the date of receipt indicated on the return receipt or equivalent.

#### ARTICLE II.3 – LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES

II.3.1 The Agency shall not be held liable for any damage caused or sustained by any of the beneficiaries, including any damage caused to third parties as a consequence of or during the implementation of the action.

II.3.2 Except in cases of force majeure, the beneficiaries shall compensate the Agency for any damage sustained by it as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement.

#### ARTICLE II.4 - CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

II.4.1 The beneficiaries shall take all necessary measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Agreement is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional life or any other shared interest with the Agency, or any third party related to the subject matter of the Agreement (“conflict of interests”).

II.4.2 Any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests during the implementation of the Agreement shall be notified to the Agency, in writing, without delay. The beneficiaries shall immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The Agency reserves the right to verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken within a specified deadline.

#### ARTICLE II.5 – CONFIDENTIALITY

II.5.1 The Agency and the beneficiaries shall preserve the confidentiality of any information and documents, in any form, which are disclosed in writing or orally in relation to the implementation of the Agreement and which are explicitly indicated in writing as confidential. It does not include information that is publicly available.

II.5.2 The Agency and the beneficiaries shall not use confidential information and documents for any reason other than fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the other party in writing.

II.5.3 The Agency and the beneficiaries shall be bound by the obligations referred to in Articles II.5.1 and II.5.2 during the implementation of the Agreement and for a period of five years starting from the payment of the balance, unless:

(a) the party concerned agrees to release the other party from the confidentiality obligations earlier;

(b) the confidential information or documents become public through other means than a breach of the confidentiality obligations;

(c) the disclosure of the confidential information or documents is required by law.

## ARTICLE II.6 – PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

### II.6.1 Processing of personal data by the Agency

Any personal data included in the Agreement shall be processed by the Agency pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

Such data shall be processed by the data controller identified in Article 6.1 solely for the purposes of the implementation, management and monitoring of the Agreement or to protect the financial interests of the EU, including checks, audits and investigations in accordance with Article II.27.

The beneficiaries shall have the right of access to their personal data and the right to rectify any such data. Should the beneficiaries have any queries concerning the processing of their personal data, they shall address them to the data controller, identified in Article 6.1.

The beneficiaries shall have the right of recourse at any time to the European Data Protection Supervisor.

### II.6.2 Processing of personal data by the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements).

The access to data that the beneficiaries grant to their personnel shall be limited to the extent strictly necessary for the implementation, management and monitoring of the Agreement.

The beneficiaries undertake to adopt appropriate technical and organisational security measures having regard to the risks inherent in the processing and to the nature of the personal data concerned, in order to:

(a) prevent any unauthorised person from gaining access to computer systems processing personal data, and especially:

unauthorised reading, copying, alteration or removal of storage media;

unauthorised data input as well as any unauthorised disclosure, alteration or erasure of stored personal data;

unauthorised use of data-processing systems by means of data transmission facilities;

(b) ensure that authorised users of a data-processing system can access only the personal data to which their access right refers;

(c) record which personal data have been communicated, when and to whom;

(d) ensure that personal data being processed on behalf of third parties can be processed only in the manner prescribed by the Agency;

(e) ensure that, during communication of personal data and transport of storage media, the data cannot be read, copied or erased without authorisation;

(f) design their organisational structure in such a way that it meets data protection requirements.

## ARTICLE II.7 – VISIBILITY OF UNION FUNDING

### II.7.1 Information on Union funding and use of European Union emblem

Unless the Agency requests or agrees otherwise, any communication or publication related to the action, made by the beneficiaries jointly or individually, including at conferences, seminars or in any information or promotional materials (such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc.), shall indicate that the action has received funding from the Union and shall display the European Union emblem.

When displayed in association with another logo, the European Union emblem must have appropriate prominence.

The obligation to display the European Union emblem does not confer to the beneficiaries a right of exclusive use. The beneficiaries shall not appropriate the European Union emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

For the purposes of the first, second and third subparagraphs and under the conditions specified therein, the beneficiaries are exempted from the obligation to obtain prior permission from the Agency to use the European Union emblem.

#### II.7.2 Disclaimers excluding Agency responsibility

Any communication or publication related to the action, made by the beneficiaries jointly or individually in any form and using any means, shall indicate that it reflects only the author's view and that the Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

### ARTICLE II.8 – PRE-EXISTING RIGHTS AND OWNERSHIP AND USE OF THE RESULTS (INCLUDING INTELLECTUAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY RIGHTS)

#### II.8.1 Ownership of the results by the beneficiaries

Unless stipulated otherwise in the Agreement, ownership of the results of the action, including industrial and intellectual property rights, and of the reports and other documents relating to it, shall be vested in the beneficiaries.

#### II.8.2 Pre-existing rights

Pre-existing material is any materials, document, technology or know-how which exists prior to the beneficiary using it for the production of a result in the implementation of the action. Pre-existing right is any industrial and intellectual property right on pre-existing material; it may consist in a right of ownership, a licence right and/or a right of use belonging to the beneficiary or any other third parties.

If the Agency sends the beneficiaries a written request specifying which of the results it intends to use, the beneficiaries must:

- (a) establish a list specifying all pre-existing rights included in those results; and
- (b) provide this list to the Agency at the latest with the request for payment of the balance.

The beneficiaries shall ensure that they or their affiliated entities have all the rights to use any pre-existing rights during the implementation of the Agreement.

#### II.8.3 Rights of use of the results and of pre-existing rights by the Agency

The beneficiaries grant the Agency the following rights to use the results of the action:

- (a) for its own purposes, and in particular, to make available to persons working for the Agency, Union institutions, other Union agencies and bodies and to Member States' institutions, as well as to copy and reproduce in whole or in part and in an unlimited number of copies;
- (b) reproduction: the right to authorise direct or indirect, temporary or permanent reproduction of the results by any means (mechanical, digital or other) and in any form, in whole or in part;
- (c) communication to the public: the right to authorise any display performance or communication to the public, by wire or wireless means, including making the results available to the public in such a way that members of the public may access them from a place and at a time individually chosen by them; this right also includes communication and broadcasting by cable or by satellite;
- (d) distribution: the right to authorise any form of distribution of results or copies of the results to the public;
- (e) adaptation: the right to modify the results;
- (f) translation;
- (g) the right to store and archive the results in line with the document management rules applicable to the Agency, including digitalisation or converting the format for preservation or new use purposes;
- (h) where the results are documents, the right to authorise the reuse of the documents in conformity with Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents if that Decision is applicable and if the documents fall within its scope and are not excluded by any of its provisions. For the sake of this provision, the terms 'reuse' and 'document' have the meanings given to them by Decision 2011/833/EU.

Additional rights of use for the Agency may be provided for in the Special Conditions.

The beneficiaries shall warrant that the Agency has the right to use any pre-existing rights, which have been included in the results of the action. Unless specified otherwise in the Special Conditions, those pre-existing rights shall be used for the same purposes and under the same conditions applicable to the rights of use of the results of the action.

Information about the copyright owner shall be inserted when the result is divulged by the Agency. The copyright information shall read: "© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licenced to the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency under conditions."

If the beneficiaries grant rights of use to the Agency, this does not affect their confidentiality obligations under Article II.5 or the beneficiaries' obligations under Article II.1.

#### ARTICLE II.9 – AWARD OF CONTRACTS NECESSARY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

II.9.1 Where the implementation of the action requires the procurement of goods, works or services, the beneficiaries shall award the contract to the tender offering best value for money or, as appropriate, to the tender offering the lowest price. In doing so, they shall avoid any conflict of interests.

The beneficiaries shall ensure that the Agency, the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may exercise their rights under Article II.27 also towards the contractor.

II.9.2 Beneficiaries acting in their capacity of 'contracting authorities' within the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC<sup>1</sup> or Directive 2014/24/EU<sup>2</sup> or any previous applicable Union legislation or 'contracting entities' within the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC<sup>3</sup> or Directive 2014/25/EU<sup>4</sup> or any previous applicable Union legislation must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

II.9.3 The beneficiaries shall retain sole responsibility for carrying out the action and for compliance with the provisions of the Agreement. The beneficiaries shall ensure that any procurement contract contains provisions stipulating that the contractor has no rights vis-à-vis the Agency under the Agreement.

II.9.4 The beneficiaries shall ensure that the conditions applicable to them under Articles II.3, II.4, II.5 and II.8 are also applicable to the contractor.

II.9.5 Where, in accordance with Article 3(a), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of eligible costs:

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts

<sup>2</sup> Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC

<sup>3</sup> Directive 2004/17/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors

<sup>4</sup> Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.9.1, the costs related to the contract concerned shall be ineligible;

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.9.2, II.9.3 or II.9.4, the grant may be reduced in proportion to the seriousness of the breach of obligations.

Where, in accordance with Article 3(b), (c) or (d) the grant takes the form of a unit, lump sum or flat-rate contribution, if a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.9.1, II.9.2, II.9.3 or II.9.4, the grant may be reduced in proportion to the seriousness of the breach of obligations.

#### ARTICLE II.10 – SUBCONTRACTING OF TASKS FORMING PART OF THE ACTION

II.10.1 A "subcontract" is a procurement contract within the meaning of Article II.9, which covers the implementation by a third party of tasks forming part of the action as described in Annex I.

II.10.2 Beneficiaries may subcontract tasks forming part of the action, provided that, in addition to the conditions specified in Article II.9.1, the following conditions are complied with:

subcontracting does not cover core tasks of the action;

recourse to subcontracting is justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;

not applicable;

any recourse to subcontracting, if not provided for in Annex I, is communicated by the coordinator and approved by the Agency. The Agency may grant approval:

(i) before any recourse to subcontracting, if the beneficiaries request an amendment as provided for in Article II.12; or

(ii) after recourse to subcontracting if the subcontracting:  
is specifically justified in the interim or final technical report referred to in Article II.23.2; and  
does not entail changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants.

II.10.3 Beneficiaries acting in their capacity of 'contracting authorities' within the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC and Directive 2014/24/EU<sup>5</sup> or any previous applicable Union legislation or contracting entities within the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC and Directive 2014/25/EU<sup>6</sup> or any previous applicable Union legislation must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

II.10.4 The beneficiaries shall retain sole responsibility for carrying out the action and for compliance with the provisions of the Agreement. The beneficiaries shall ensure that any subcontract contains provisions stipulating that the subcontractor has no rights vis-à-vis the Agency under the Agreement.

II.10.5 The beneficiaries shall ensure that the conditions applicable to them under Articles II.3, II.4, II.5, II.7 and II.8 are also applicable to the subcontractor.

II.10.6 Where, in accordance with Article 3(a), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of eligible costs:

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.10.2, the costs related to the subcontract concerned shall be ineligible;

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.10.3, II.10.4 or II.10.5, the grant may be reduced in proportion to the seriousness of the breach of obligations.

Where, in accordance with Article 3(b), (c) or (d) the grant takes the form of a unit, lump sum or flat-rate contribution if a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.10.2, II.10.3, II.10.4 or II.10.5, the grant may be reduced in proportion to the seriousness of the breach of obligations.

#### ARTICLE II.11 - FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIRD PARTIES

II.11.1 Where the implementation of the action requires giving financial support to third parties, the beneficiaries shall give such financial support in accordance with the conditions specified in Annex I, which shall at least contain:

the maximum amount of financial support, which shall not exceed EUR 60 000 for each third party except where the financial support is the primary aim of the action as specified in Annex I;

the criteria for determining the exact amount of the financial support;

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<sup>5</sup> Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC

<sup>6</sup> Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC

the different types of activity that may receive financial support, on the basis of a fixed list;

the definition of the persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support;

the criteria for giving the financial support.

The beneficiaries shall ensure that the Agency, the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may exercise their rights under Article II.27 also towards the third parties receiving financial support.

II.11.2 By way of derogation from Article II.11.1, in case the financial support takes the form of a prize, the beneficiaries shall give such financial support in accordance with the conditions specified in Annex I, which shall at least contain:

- (a) the conditions for participation;
- (b) the award criteria;
- (c) the amount of the prize;
- (d) the payment arrangements.

The beneficiaries shall ensure that the Agency, the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may exercise their rights under Article II.27 also towards the third parties receiving a prize.

II.11.3 The beneficiaries shall ensure that the conditions applicable to them under Articles II.3, II.4, II.5, II.7 and II.8 are also applicable to the third parties receiving financial support.

II.11.4 Where, in accordance with Article 3(a), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of eligible costs:

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.11.1 or II.11.2, the costs related to the financial support shall be ineligible;

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.11.3, the grant may be reduced in proportion to the seriousness of the breach of obligations.

Where, in accordance with Article 3(b), (c) or (d) the grant takes the form of a unit, lump sum or flat-rate contribution if a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under Article II.11.1 II.11.2 or II.11.3, the grant may be reduced in proportion to the seriousness of the breach of obligations.

## ARTICLE II.12 – AMENDMENTS TO THE AGREEMENT

II.12.1 Any amendment to the Agreement shall be made in writing.

II.12.2 An amendment may not have the purpose or the effect of making changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants.

II.12.3 Any request for amendment shall be duly justified, be accompanied by appropriate supporting documents and shall be sent to the other party in due time before it is due to take effect, and in any case three months before the end of the period set out in Article 2.2, except in cases duly substantiated by the party requesting the amendment and accepted by the other party.

II.12.4 A request for amendment shall be jointly submitted by all the beneficiaries or shall be submitted by a beneficiary acting on behalf of all beneficiaries.

II.12.5 Amendments shall enter into force on the date on which the last party signs or on the date of approval of the request for amendment.

Amendments shall take effect on a date agreed by the parties or, in the absence of such an agreed date, on the date on which the amendment enters into force.

## ARTICLE II.13 – ASSIGNMENT OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENTS TO THIRD PARTIES

II.13.1 Claims for payments of the beneficiaries against the Agency may not be assigned to third parties, except in duly justified cases where the situation warrants it.

The assignment shall only be enforceable against the Agency if it has accepted the assignment on the basis of a written and reasoned request to that effect made by the beneficiary requesting the assignment.

In the absence of such an acceptance, or in the event of failure to observe the terms thereof, the assignment shall have no effect on the Agency.

II.13.2 In no circumstances shall such an assignment release the beneficiaries from their obligations towards the Agency.

## ARTICLE II.14 – FORCE MAJEURE

II.14.1 "*Force majeure*" shall mean any unforeseeable, exceptional situation or event beyond the parties' control, which prevents either of them from fulfilling any of their obligations under the Agreement, which was not attributable to error or negligence on their part or on the part of subcontractors, affiliated entities, implementing bodies or third parties in receipt of

financial support and which proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising due diligence. Any default of a service, defect in equipment or material or delays in making them available, as well as labour disputes, strikes or financial difficulties cannot be invoked as *force majeure*, unless they stem directly from a relevant case of *force majeure*.

II.14.2 A party faced with *force majeure* shall formally notify the other party without delay, stating the nature of the situation or of the event, its likely duration and foreseeable effects.

II.14.3 The parties shall take the necessary measures to limit any damage due to *force majeure*. They shall do their best to resume the implementation of the action as soon as possible.

II.14.4 The party faced with *force majeure* shall not be held to be in breach of its obligations under the Agreement if it has been prevented from fulfilling them by *force majeure*.

#### ARTICLE II.15 – SUSPENSION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

##### II.15.1 Suspension of the implementation by the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries, acting jointly, or a beneficiary, acting on behalf of all beneficiaries, may suspend the implementation of the action or any part thereof, if exceptional circumstances make such implementation impossible or excessively difficult, in particular in the event of *force majeure*. The beneficiaries, acting jointly, or a beneficiary, acting on behalf of all beneficiaries, shall inform the Agency without delay, giving the reasons for suspension, including details about the date or period when the exceptional circumstances occurred and the expected date of resumption.

Unless the Agreement or the participation of a beneficiary is terminated in accordance with Articles II.16.1, II.16.2 or points (c) or (d) of Article II.16.3.1, the beneficiaries acting jointly, or a beneficiary, acting on behalf of all beneficiaries, shall, once the circumstances allow resuming the implementation of the action, inform the Agency immediately and present a request for amendment of the Agreement as provided for in Article II.15.3.

##### II.15.2 Suspension of the implementation by the Agency

II.15.2.1 The Agency may suspend the implementation of the action or any part thereof:

if the Agency has evidence that a beneficiary has committed substantial errors, irregularities or fraud in the award procedure or in the implementation of the Agreement or if a beneficiary fails to comply with its obligations under the Agreement;

if the Agency has evidence that a beneficiary has committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations under other grants funded by the Union

or the European Atomic Energy Community which were awarded to that beneficiary under similar conditions, provided that those errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations have a material impact on this grant;

if the Agency suspects substantial errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations committed by a beneficiary in the award procedure or in the implementation of the Agreement and needs to verify whether they have actually occurred; or

following an evaluation of the progress of the project, in particular in the event of major delays in the implementation of the action; or

if the Agency does not receive all the documents required under Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community policy in the field of water, or any other relevant environmental legislation as listed in the application form (the section concerning compliance with Union policy on environmental protection).

II.15.2.2 Before suspending the implementation the Agency shall formally notify all the beneficiaries of its intention to suspend, specifying the reasons thereof, and, in the cases referred to in points (a), (b), (d) and (e) of Article II.15.2.1, the necessary conditions for resuming the implementation. The beneficiaries shall be invited to submit observations within 30 calendar days from receipt of this notification.

If, after examination of the observations submitted by the beneficiaries, the Agency decides to stop the suspension procedure, it shall formally notify all the beneficiaries thereof.

If no observations have been submitted or if, despite the observations submitted by the beneficiaries, the Agency decides to pursue the suspension procedure, it may suspend the implementation by formally notifying all the beneficiaries thereof, specifying the reasons for the suspension and, in the cases referred to in points (a), (b), (d) and (e) of Article II.15.2.1, the definitive conditions for resuming the implementation or, in the case referred to in point (c) of Article II.15.2.1, the indicative date of completion of the necessary verification.

The suspension shall take effect five calendar days after the receipt of the notification by the beneficiaries or on a later date, where the notification so provides.

In order to resume the implementation, the beneficiaries shall endeavour to meet the notified conditions as soon as possible and shall inform the Agency of any progress made in this respect.

Unless the Agreement or the participation of a beneficiary is terminated in accordance with Articles II.16.1, II.16.2 or points (c), (i), (j), (k), (m) or (o) of Article II.16.3.1, the Agency shall,

as soon as it considers that the conditions for resuming the implementation have been met or the necessary verification, including on-the-spot checks, has been carried out, formally notify all the beneficiaries thereof and invite them to present a request for amendment of the Agreement as provided for in Article II.15.3.

#### II.15.3 Effects of the suspension

If the implementation of the action can be resumed and the Agreement is not terminated, an amendment to the Agreement shall be made in accordance with Article II.12 in order to establish the date on which the action shall be resumed, to extend the duration of the action and to make any other modifications that may be necessary to adapt the action to the new implementing conditions.

The suspension is deemed lifted with effect as from the date of resumption of the action agreed by the parties in accordance with the first subparagraph and set out in the amendment. Such a date may be before the date on which the amendment enters into force.

Any costs incurred by the beneficiaries, during the period of suspension, for the implementation of the suspended action or the suspended part thereof, shall not be reimbursed or covered by the grant.

The right of the Agency to suspend the implementation is without prejudice to its right to terminate the Agreement or the participation of a beneficiary in accordance with Article II.16.3 and its right to reduce the grant or recover amounts unduly paid in accordance with Articles II.25.4 and II.26.

Neither party shall be entitled to claim damages due to a suspension by the other party.

### ARTICLE II.16 – TERMINATION OF THE AGREEMENT

#### II.16.1 Termination of the Agreement by the beneficiaries

In duly justified cases, the beneficiaries, acting jointly, or a beneficiary, acting on behalf of all beneficiaries, may terminate the Agreement by formally notifying the Agency thereof, stating clearly the reasons and specifying the date on which the termination shall take effect. The notification shall be sent before the termination is due to take effect.

If no reasons are given or if the Agency considers that the reasons exposed cannot justify the termination, it shall formally notify all the beneficiaries, specifying the grounds thereof, and the Agreement shall be deemed to have been terminated improperly, with the consequences set out in the fourth subparagraph of Article II.16.4.1. The termination takes effect on the day specified in the formal notification.

#### II.16.2 Termination of the participation of one or more beneficiaries by the beneficiaries

In duly justified cases, the participation of any one or several beneficiaries in the Agreement may be terminated by that beneficiary or those beneficiaries, or by another beneficiary acting on behalf of the other beneficiaries. When notifying such termination to the Agency, the beneficiary or beneficiaries shall include the reasons for the termination of the participation, the date on which the termination shall take effect, the proposal of the remaining beneficiaries relating to the reallocation of the tasks of that beneficiary or those beneficiaries or, where relevant, to the nomination of one or more replacements which shall succeed that beneficiary or those beneficiaries in all their rights and obligations under the Agreement, if notification is made by another beneficiary, the opinion of the beneficiary or beneficiaries the participation of which is terminated (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing), and a request for amendment as provided for in Article II.16.4.1. The notification shall be sent before the termination is due to take effect.

If no reasons are given or if the Agency considers that the reasons exposed cannot justify the termination, it shall formally notify all the beneficiaries, specifying the grounds thereof, and the participation shall be deemed to have been terminated improperly, with the consequences set out in the fourth subparagraph of Article II.16.4.1. The termination takes effect on the day specified in the formal notification.

### II.16.3 Termination of the Agreement or the participation of one or more beneficiaries by the Agency

II.16.3.1 The Agency may decide to terminate the Agreement or the participation of any one or several beneficiaries participating in the action, in the following circumstances:

if a change to the beneficiary's legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation is likely to affect the implementation of the Agreement substantially or calls into question the decision to award the grant;

if, following the termination of the participation of any one or several beneficiaries, the necessary modifications to the Agreement would call into question the decision awarding the grant or would result in unequal treatment of applicants;

if the beneficiaries do not implement the action as specified in Annex I or if a beneficiary fails to comply with another substantial obligation incumbent on it under the terms of the Agreement;

in the event of *force majeure*, notified in accordance with Article II.14, or in the event of suspension by the coordinator as a result of exceptional circumstances, notified in accordance with Article II.15, where resuming the implementation is impossible or where the necessary modifications to the Agreement would call into question the decision awarding the grant or would result in unequal treatment of applicants;

if a beneficiary or any person that assumes unlimited liability for the debts of that beneficiary comes under any of the situations provided for in points (a) or (b) of Article 106 (1) of the Financial Regulation<sup>7</sup>;

if a beneficiary or any related person, as defined in the second subparagraph, comes under any of the situations provided for in points (c), (d), (e) or (f) of Article 106 (1) or comes under Article 106 (2) of the Financial Regulation;

not applicable;

not applicable;

if the Agency has evidence that a beneficiary or any related person, as defined in the second subparagraph, have committed substantial errors, irregularities or fraud in the award procedure or in the implementation of the Agreement, including in the event of submission of false information or failure to submit required information;

if the Agency has evidence that a beneficiary has committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations under other grants funded by the Union or the European Atomic Energy Community which were awarded to that beneficiary under similar conditions, provided that those errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations have a material impact on this grant;

following an evaluation of the progress of the project, in particular in the event of major delays in the implementation of the action;

if the action has not started within two years of the starting date set out in Article 2.2 or, for grants for studies, if the action has not started within one year of the starting date set out in Article 2.2;

if the Agency does not receive all the documents required under Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community policy in the field of water, or any other relevant environmental legislation as listed in the application form (the section concerning compliance with Union policy on environmental protection);

not applicable;

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<sup>7</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

if the Agency has sent a beneficiary a formal notification asking it to end the participation of its affiliated entity because that entity is in a situation provided for in points (f), (i) or (j) and that beneficiary has failed to request an amendment ending the participation of the entity and reallocating its tasks.

For the purposes of points (f) and (i), "any related person" shall mean any person who has the power to represent the beneficiary or to take decisions on its behalf.

For the purposes of points (i) and (j), "fraud" shall mean any intentional act or omission affecting the Union's financial interests relating to the use or presentation of false, incorrect or incomplete statements or documents, to non-disclosure of information in violation of a specific obligation.

For the purposes of point (i), "substantial error" shall mean any infringement of a provision of an agreement resulting from an act or omission, which causes or might cause a loss to the Union's budget.

For the purposes of points (i) and (j), "irregularity" shall mean any infringement of a provision of Union law resulting from an act or omission by a beneficiary, which has or would have the effect of prejudicing the Union's budget.

II.16.3.2 Before terminating the Agreement or the participation of any one or several beneficiaries, the Agency shall formally notify all the beneficiaries of its intention to terminate, specifying the reasons thereof and inviting the beneficiaries, acting jointly, or one beneficiary, acting on behalf of all beneficiaries, within 45 calendar days from receipt of the notification, to submit observations and, in the case of point (c) of Article II.16.3.1, to inform the Agency about the measures taken to ensure that the beneficiaries continue to fulfil their obligations under the Agreement.

If, after examination of the observations submitted by the beneficiaries, the Agency decides to stop the termination procedure, it shall formally notify all the beneficiaries thereof.

If no observations have been submitted or if, despite the observations submitted by the beneficiaries, the Agency decides to pursue the termination procedure, it may terminate the Agreement or the participation of any one or several beneficiaries by formally notifying all the beneficiaries thereof, specifying the reasons for the termination.

In the cases referred to in points (a), (b), (c), (e) and (k) of Article II.16.3.1, the formal notification shall specify the date on which the termination takes effect. In the cases referred to in points (d), (f), (i), (j), (l), (m) and (o) of Article II.16.3.1, the termination shall take effect on the day following the date on which the formal notification was received by the beneficiaries.

#### II.16.4 Effects of termination

II.16.4.1 Where the Agreement is terminated, payments by the Agency shall be limited to the amount determined in accordance with Article II.25 on the basis of the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiaries and the actual level of implementation of the action on the date when the termination takes effect. Costs relating to current commitments, which are not due for execution until after the termination, shall not be taken into account. The beneficiaries shall have 60 days from the date when the termination of the Agreement takes effect, as provided for in Articles II.16.1 and II.16.3.2, to produce a request for payment of the balance in accordance with Article II.23.2. If no request for payment of the balance is received within this time limit, the Agency shall not reimburse or cover any costs which are not included in a financial statement approved by it or which are not justified in an ASR or the final report approved by it. In accordance with Article II.26, the Agency shall recover any amount already paid, if its use is not substantiated by ASRs or the final report and, where applicable, by the financial statements approved by the Agency.

Where the participation of a beneficiary is terminated, the beneficiaries must submit a request for amendment including:

- (i) a proposal to reallocate the tasks of the beneficiary or beneficiaries concerned by the termination; and
- (ii) if necessary, the addition of one or more new beneficiaries to succeed the beneficiary or beneficiaries concerned in all their rights and obligations under the Agreement.

If the Agency terminates the participation of a beneficiary, the beneficiaries must submit the request for amendment within 60 calendar days from the day on which the termination takes effect. If the beneficiaries terminate the participation of a beneficiary, the request for amendment must be included in the formal notification of termination referred to in Article II.16.2.

If termination takes effect after the end of the implementation period, no request for amendment must be provided.

If the request for amendment is rejected by the Agency, the Agreement may be terminated in accordance with Article II.16.3.1 (b). The request for amendment may be rejected if it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or is contrary to the equal treatment of applicants.

The beneficiary concerned shall have 60 days from the date when the termination of its participation takes effect to submit to the Agency an ASR and a financial statement covering the period from the end of the last reporting period according to Article 4.1.1 for which a report has been submitted to the Agency to the date on which the termination takes effect. It may also produce a request for interim payment in accordance with Article II.23.2. Only those costs incurred by the beneficiary concerned up to the date when termination of its participation takes effect shall be reimbursed or covered by the grant. Costs relating to current commitments, which were not due for execution until after the termination, shall not be taken into account.

Where the Agency, in accordance with point (c) of Article II.16.3.1, is terminating the Agreement or the participation of a beneficiary on the grounds that a beneficiary has failed to produce the request for payment and, after a reminder, has still not complied with this obligation within the deadline set out in Article II.23.3, the first or second subparagraph shall apply, subject to the following:

there shall be no additional time period from the date when the termination takes effect for the beneficiary to produce a request for payment in accordance with Article II.23.2; and

the Agency shall not reimburse or cover any costs incurred by the beneficiary up to the date of termination or up to the end of the period set out in Article 2.2, whichever is the earlier, which are not included in a financial statement approved by it or which are not justified in an ASR approved by it.

In addition to the first, second and third subparagraphs, where the Agreement or the participation of a beneficiary is terminated improperly by the beneficiaries within the meaning of Articles II.16.1 and II.16.2, or where the Agreement or the participation of a beneficiary is terminated by the Agency on the grounds set out in points (c), (f), (h), (i), (j), (k), (m) and (o) of Article II.16.3.1, the Agency may also reduce the grant or recover amounts unduly paid in accordance with Articles II.25.4 and II.26, in proportion to the gravity of the failings in question and after allowing the beneficiaries, acting jointly, or one beneficiary, acting on behalf of all beneficiaries, to submit their observations.

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations continue to apply, in particular those under Articles 4, II.5, II.7, II.8, II.13, II.27 and any additional provisions on the use of the results, as set out in the Special Conditions.

II.16.4.2 Where the Agency, in accordance with point (l) of Article II.16.3.1, is terminating the Agreement on the ground that the action has not started by the set deadline, the following shall apply:

no beneficiary shall produce a request for payment of the balance; and

the final amount of the grant shall be EUR 0 (zero euro). The Agency shall recover any amounts unduly paid in accordance with Article II.26.

II.16.4.3 Neither party shall be entitled to claim compensation on account of a termination by the other party.

ARTICLE II.17 – NOT APPLICABLE

ARTICLE II.18 – APPLICABLE LAW, SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES AND ENFORCEABLE DECISION



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II.18.1 The Agreement is governed by the applicable Union law complemented, where necessary, by the law of Belgium.

II.18.2 Pursuant to Article 272 TFEU, the General Court or, on appeal, the Court of Justice of the European Union, shall have sole jurisdiction to hear any dispute between the Union and any beneficiary concerning the interpretation, application or validity of this Agreement, if such dispute cannot be settled amicably.

II.18.3 By virtue of Article 299 TFEU, for the purposes of recoveries within the meaning of Article II.26, the Commission may adopt an enforceable decision to impose pecuniary obligations on persons other than States. An action may be brought against such decision before the General Court of the European Union pursuant to Article 263 TFEU.

## PART B – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

### ARTICLE II.19 – ELIGIBLE COSTS

#### II.19.1 Conditions for the eligibility of costs

"Eligible costs" of the action are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary which meet the following criteria:

they are incurred in the period set out in Article 2.2, with the exception of costs relating to the request for payment of the balance and the corresponding supporting documents referred to in Article II.23.2.

Costs of contracts for goods, works or services or of subcontracts are considered to be incurred when the contract or subcontract (or a part of it) is executed, i.e. when the goods, works or services (including studies) are supplied, delivered or provided;

they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action set out in Annex III;

they are incurred in connection with the action as described in Annex I and are necessary for its implementation; in particular, for the costs of contracts for goods, the goods are supplied in a Member State or in any other countries where the action is implemented as described in Annex I; for the costs of contracts for works, the works are delivered in a Member State or in any other countries where the action is implemented as described in Annex I; for the costs of contracts for services (including studies), the services provided concern a Member State or any other countries where the action is implemented as described in Annex I;

they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and with the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;

they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation; and

(f) they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

#### II.19.2 Eligible direct costs

"Direct costs" of the action are those specific costs which are directly linked to the implementation of the action and can therefore be attributed directly to it. They may not include any indirect costs.

To be eligible, direct costs shall comply with the conditions of eligibility set out in Article II.19.1.

In particular, the following categories of costs are eligible direct costs, provided that they satisfy the conditions of eligibility set out in Article II.19.1 as well as the following conditions:

(a) the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the beneficiary or an equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration.

Those costs include actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration. They may also comprise additional remunerations, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of the nature of those contracts, provided that they are paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required, independently from the source of funding used;

The costs of natural persons working under a contract with the beneficiary other than an employment contract or who are seconded to the beneficiary by a third party against payment may be included under such costs of personnel, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:

(i) the natural person works under the conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organized, the tasks are performed and the premises where they are performed);

(ii) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary (unless exceptionally agreed otherwise); and

(iii) the costs are not significantly different from the costs of staff performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary;

(b) costs of travel and related subsistence allowances, provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;

(c) the full costs of purchase of equipment, infrastructure and other assets shall be eligible, provided that they are treated as capital expenditure in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiary and are recorded in the fixed assets account of its balance sheet and if the asset has been purchased in accordance with Article II.9.1.

The costs of rental or lease of equipment or other assets are also eligible, provided that these costs do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment or assets and are exclusive of any finance fee;

- (d) costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they are purchased in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article II.9.1 and are directly assigned to the action;
- (e) costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the Agreement (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, audits, translations, reproduction), including the costs of requested financial guarantees, provided that the corresponding services are purchased in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article II.9.1;
- (f) costs entailed by service contracts, including costs of environmental studies on the protection of the environment and on compliance with the relevant Union law, provided that the corresponding services are purchased in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article II.9.1 and costs entailed by subcontracts within the meaning of Article II.10, provided that the conditions laid down in Article II.10.2 are met;
- (g) costs of financial support to third parties within the meaning of Article II.11, provided that the conditions laid down in Article II.11.1 or II.11.2 are met;
- (h) duties, taxes and charges paid by the beneficiary, notably non-deductible value added tax (VAT), provided that they are included in eligible direct costs, and unless specified otherwise in the Agreement.

#### II.19.3 Indirect costs

"Indirect costs" of the action are those costs which are not specific costs directly linked to the implementation of the action and can therefore not be attributed directly to it. They may not include any costs identifiable or declared as eligible direct costs.

Indirect costs shall not be eligible.

#### II.19.4 Ineligible costs

In addition to any other costs which do not fulfil the conditions set out in Article II.19.1, the following costs shall not be considered eligible:

return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary;

debt and debt service charges;

provisions for losses or debts;

interest owed;

doubtful debts;

exchange losses;

costs of transfers from the Agency charged by the bank of a beneficiary;

costs declared by the beneficiary in the framework of another action receiving a grant financed from the Union budget (including grants awarded by a Member State and financed from the Union budget and grants awarded by other bodies than the Commission for the purpose of implementing the Union budget); In particular, beneficiaries receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget cannot declare indirect costs for the period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action.

contributions in kind from third parties;

excessive or reckless expenditure;

deductible VAT;

costs of land and building acquisition (including expropriation costs).

## ARTICLE II.20 – IDENTIFIABILITY AND VERIFIABILITY OF THE AMOUNTS DECLARED

### II.20.1 Reimbursement of actual costs

Where, in accordance with Article 3(a)(i), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of actual costs, the beneficiary must declare as eligible costs the costs it actually incurred for the action.

If requested to do so in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27, the beneficiary must be able to provide adequate supporting documents to prove the costs declared, such as contracts, invoices and accounting records. In addition, the beneficiary's usual accounting and internal control procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the amounts declared with the amounts recorded in its accounting statements as well as with the amounts indicated in the supporting documents.

### II.20.2 Reimbursement of pre-determined unit costs or pre-determined unit contribution

Where, in accordance with Article 3(a)(ii) or (b), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of unit costs or of a unit contribution, the beneficiary must declare as eligible costs or as requested contribution the amount obtained by multiplying the amount per unit specified in Article 3(a)(ii) or (b) by the actual number of units used or produced.

If requested to do so in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27, the beneficiary must be able to provide adequate supporting documents to prove the number of

units declared. However, the beneficiary does not need to identify the actual eligible costs covered or to provide supporting documents, notably accounting statements, to prove the amount declared per unit.

#### II.20.3 Reimbursement of pre-determined lump sum costs or pre-determined lump sum contribution

Where, in accordance with Article 3(a)(iii) or (c), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of lump sum costs or of a lump sum contribution, the beneficiary must declare as eligible costs or as requested contribution the global amount specified in Article 3(a)(iii) or (c), subject to the proper implementation of the corresponding tasks or part of the action as described in Annex I.

If requested to do so in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27, the beneficiary must be able to provide adequate supporting documents to prove the proper implementation. However, the beneficiary does not need to identify the actual eligible costs covered or to provide supporting documents, notably accounting statements, to prove the amount declared as lump sum.

#### II.20.4 Reimbursement of pre-determined flat-rate costs or pre-determined flat-rate contribution

Where, in accordance with Article 3(a)(iv) or (d), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of flat-rate costs or of a flat-rate contribution, the beneficiary must declare as eligible costs or as requested contribution the amount obtained by applying the flat rate specified in Article 3(a)(iv) or (d).

If requested to do so in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27, the beneficiary must be able to provide adequate supporting documents to prove the eligible costs or requested contribution to which the flat rate applies. However, the beneficiary does not need to identify the actual eligible costs covered or to provide supporting documents, notably accounting statements, for the flat rate applied.

#### II.20.5 Reimbursement of costs declared on the basis of the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices

Where, in accordance with Article 3(a)(v), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of unit costs declared on the basis of the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices, the beneficiary must declare as eligible costs the amount obtained by multiplying the amount per unit calculated in accordance with its usual cost accounting practices by the actual number of units used or produced. If requested to do so in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27, the beneficiary must be able to provide adequate supporting documents to prove the number of units declared.

Where, in accordance with Article 3(a)(v), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of lump sum costs declared on the basis of the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices, the beneficiary must declare as eligible costs the global amount calculated in accordance with its usual cost accounting practices, subject to the proper implementation of the corresponding tasks or part of the action. If requested to do so in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27, the beneficiary must be able to provide adequate supporting documents to prove the proper implementation.

Where, in accordance with Article 3(a)(v), the grant takes the form of the reimbursement of flat-rate costs declared on the basis of the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices, the beneficiary must declare as eligible costs the amount obtained by applying the flat rate calculated in accordance with its usual cost accounting practices. If requested to do so in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27, the beneficiary must be able to provide adequate supporting documents to prove the eligible costs to which the flat rate applies.

In all three cases provided for in the first, second and third subparagraphs, the beneficiary does not need to identify the actual eligible costs covered, but it must ensure that the cost accounting practices used for the purpose of declaring eligible costs are in compliance with the following conditions:

the cost accounting practices used constitute its usual cost accounting practices and are applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria independent from the source of funding;

the costs declared can be directly reconciled with the amounts recorded in its general accounts; and

the categories of costs used for the purpose of determining the costs declared are exclusive of any ineligible cost or costs covered by other forms of grant in accordance with Article 3.

#### ARTICLE II.21 – ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS OF ENTITIES AFFILIATED TO THE BENEFICIARIES AND OF IMPLEMENTING BODIES DESIGNATED BY THE BENEFICIARIES

II.21.1 Where the Special Conditions contain a provision on entities affiliated to the beneficiaries or a provision on implementing bodies, costs incurred by such an entity or body are eligible, provided that they satisfy the same conditions under Articles II.19 and II.20 as apply to the beneficiary, and that the beneficiary to which the entity is affiliated or by which the implementing body is designated ensures that the Agency, the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may exercise their rights under Article II.27 also towards the entity or body.

II.21.2 The beneficiary to which the entity is affiliated or by which the implementing body is designated shall ensure that the conditions applicable to it under Articles II.3, II.4, II.5, II.7, II.9 and II.10 are also applicable to the entity or body.

II.21.3 The beneficiaries shall retain sole responsibility for carrying out the action and for compliance with the provisions of the Agreement. The beneficiaries shall ensure that any agreement or contract with an affiliated entity or implementing body contains provisions stipulating that the affiliated entity or implementing body has no right vis-à-vis the Agency under the Agreement.

#### ARTICLE II.22 – BUDGET TRANSFERS

The estimated budget breakdown set out in Table 2 of Annex III may be adjusted by transfers of amounts between budget categories, without this adjustment being considered as an amendment of the Agreement within the meaning of Article II.12, provided that the action is implemented as described in Annex I.

The beneficiary may not however adjust amounts which, in accordance with Article 3(a)(iii) or (c), take the form of lump sums.

#### ARTICLE II.23 – TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTING – REQUESTS FOR PAYMENT AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

II.23.1 Action Status Reports - Requests for further pre-financing payments and supporting documents

II.23.1.1 Each beneficiary shall submit an Action Status Report (ASR) no later than 31 March following the end of each reporting period, except the last reporting period, covering its activities according to Annex I.

The ASR shall be drawn up in accordance with the template provided by the Agency via TEN-Tec and include the following:

the Agreement number, the action number, the energy sector and the project of common interest it relates to;

the name and contact details of the author of the ASR;

information on the progress achieved by the activities;

the updated indicative breakdown by activity of the estimated eligible costs referred to in Annex III, including:

the estimated eligible costs incurred for the implementation of the activities during the previous reporting periods,

the updated estimated eligible costs to be incurred for the implementation of the activities during the on-going reporting period and for each of the next reporting periods;

the financing needs per reporting period calculated as the amount obtained by application of the reimbursement rate(s) set out in Article 3 to the eligible costs referred to in indents (i) and (ii) of point (d);

the cumulated financing needs until the end of the on-going reporting period;

information on the contracts awarded for the implementation of the activities and on compliance with the requirements set out in Articles II.9 and II.10;

environmental information;

information about measures taken to publicise the action;

for beneficiaries established in the European Union, the certification by the Member State in which the beneficiary is established that the information provided in the ASR is full, reliable and true; in exceptional cases, at the request of the beneficiary, the certification may be provided by the Member State in which the action is implemented;

in the first ASR, information on implementation schedule (such as critical path, key performance rates and risk analysis), governance and monitoring of the activities (such as organisational structure, internal coordination, communication and reporting, and decision making process), and other relevant administrative provisions (such as quality controls and audits);

in subsequent ASRs, information on any modifications and, if applicable, on the progress of implementation of the arrangements referred to in point (k);

information on other sources of Union funds (CEF, ERDF, Cohesion Fund, H2020, TEN-E, EEPR, EIPA, etc.) that have been used for the project of common interest (e.g. previous or subsequent phases not covered by this Agreement).

II.23.1.2 Where Article 4.1 provides for further pre-financing payments, each beneficiary may submit a request for a further pre-financing payment together with the ASR referred to in Article II.23.1.1.

The request for a further pre-financing payment shall be accompanied by:

a statement on the amount of the previous pre-financing payments used to cover costs of the action;

where required by Article 4.1, a financial guarantee.

II.23.2 Interim and final reports - Requests for interim payments or for payment of the balance and supporting documents

II.23.2.1 Interim reports - Requests for interim payments and supporting documents

Not applicable.

II.23.2.2 Final report - Request for payment of the balance and supporting documents

Each beneficiary shall submit a request for payment of the balance within 12 months following the completion date of the action as referred to in Article 2.2, covering its activities according to Annex I. The requests for payment of the balance shall be jointly submitted by all beneficiaries or shall be submitted by a beneficiary, acting on behalf of all beneficiaries.

The request for payment of the balance shall be accompanied by the following documents:

(a) the final report drawn up in accordance with Annex V and containing the following:

the Agreement number, the action number, the energy sector and the project of common interest it relates to;

the name and contact details of the author of the report;

the objectives of its activities according to Annex I (if any deviation is reported);

technical information on how its activities were implemented and fulfilled its objectives;

information on the contracts awarded for the implementation of the activities and on compliance with the requirements set out in Articles II.9 and II.10;

environmental information;

information about measures taken to publicise the action;

information on other sources of Union funds (CEF, ERDF, Cohesion Fund, H2020, TEN-E, EEPR, EIPA, etc.) that have been used for the project of common interest (e.g. previous or subsequent phases not covered by this Agreement);

(ix) an executive summary for publication and transmission to interested parties on the results of the activities carried out during the implementation period in relation to the execution of the project of common interest, drawn up in accordance with Annex V and containing:

a brief description of the action and of the related activities;

the duration of the action and of the related activities;

the main outcomes of the action and of the related activities.

(b) the final financial statement drawn up in accordance with Annex VI and containing a statement of the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary, its affiliated entities and its implementing bodies for the implementation of its activities according to Annex I during the last reporting period or the last two reporting periods since the last interim financial statement;

(c) a summary financial statement ("summary financial statement"), aggregating the financial statements already submitted previously by the beneficiary and indicating the receipts referred to in Article II.25.3.2; it must be drawn up in accordance with Annex VI;

(d) for beneficiaries established in the European Union, the certification by the Member State in which the beneficiary is established that i) the information provided is full, reliable and true and ii) the costs declared in the final financial statement are real and eligible in accordance with this Agreement; in exceptional cases, at the request of the beneficiary, the certification may be provided by the Member State in which the action is implemented;

(e) unless the Special Conditions provide otherwise, a certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts ('certificate on the financial statements') for each beneficiary, each affiliated entity and each implementing body, if:

- (i) the cumulative amount of payments the beneficiary requests as reimbursement of actual costs as referred to in Article 3(a)(i) (and for which no certificate has yet been submitted) is EUR 325 000 or more;
- (ii) the maximum grant amount indicated for that beneficiary, its affiliated entities and implementing bodies in the estimated budget as reimbursement of actual costs is EUR 750 000 or more;

This certificate shall be produced by an approved auditor or, in case of public bodies, by a competent and independent public officer and drawn up in accordance with Annex VII. It shall certify that the costs declared in the final financial statement by the beneficiary concerned, its affiliated entities and its implementing bodies for the categories of costs reimbursed on the basis of actual costs are real, accurately recorded and eligible in accordance with the Agreement. It shall also certify that all the receipts referred to in Article II.25.3.2 have been declared.

The beneficiary shall certify that the information provided in the request for payment of the balance is complete, reliable and true. It shall also certify that the costs incurred can be considered eligible in accordance with the Agreement and that the request for payment is substantiated by adequate supporting documents that can be produced in the context of the checks or audits described in Article II.27. In addition, it shall certify that all the receipts referred to in Article II.25.3.2 have been declared.

#### II.23.3 Non-submission of documents

Where a beneficiary has failed to submit a request for interim payment or payment of the balance accompanied by the documents referred to above by the deadline set out in Article II.23.2 and where the beneficiary still fails to submit such a request within 60 days following a written reminder sent by the Agency, the Agency reserves the right to terminate the Agreement in accordance with Article II.16.3.1(c), with the effects described in the third and the fourth subparagraphs of Article II.16.4.1.

#### II.23.4 Currency for requests for payment and financial statements and conversion into euro

Requests for payment and financial statements shall be drafted in euro.

Beneficiaries with general accounts in a currency other than the euro shall convert costs incurred in another currency into euro at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of *Official Journal of the European Union*, determined over the corresponding reporting period, available at:

<http://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/exchange/eurofxref/html/index.en.html>.

Where no daily euro exchange rate is published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* for the currency in question, conversion shall be made at the average of the monthly accounting rates established by the Commission and published on its website

([http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/infoeuro/infoeuro\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/infoeuro/infoeuro_en.cfm)), determined over the corresponding reporting period.

Beneficiaries with general accounts in euro shall convert costs incurred in another currency into euro according to their usual accounting practices.

## ARTICLE II.24 – PAYMENTS AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

### II.24.1 Pre-financing

II.24.1.1 The pre-financing is intended to provide the beneficiaries with a float. It remains the property of the Union until it is cleared against interim payments or payment of the balance to the beneficiaries.

Where payment of pre-financing is conditional on receipt of a financial guarantee, the financial guarantee shall fulfill the following conditions:

it is provided by an approved bank or an approved financial institution. The guarantee shall be denominated in euros. Where a beneficiary is established in a third country, the Agency may agree that a bank or a financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if it considered that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State. At the request of the beneficiary and acceptance by the Agency, the financial guarantee may be replaced by a joint and several guarantee by a third party;

the guarantor stands as first-call guarantor and does not require the Agency to have recourse against the principal debtor (i.e. the beneficiary concerned); and

it provides that it remains in force until the pre-financing is cleared against interim payments or payment of the balance by the Agency and, in case the payment of the balance is made in the form of a debit note, three months after the debit note is notified to the beneficiary. The Agency shall release the guarantee within the following month.

II.24.1.2 Without prejudice to Article II.24.5, where Article 4.1 provides for a pre-financing payment upon entry into force of the Agreement or following a later date, the Agency shall pay to each beneficiary within 30 days following that date or, where required by Article 4.1, following receipt of the request for pre-financing payment or of the financial guarantee, whichever is the latest.

### II.24.2 Interim payments

Interim payments are intended to reimburse the eligible costs incurred by each beneficiary in implementing its activities during the corresponding reporting periods.

Without prejudice to Articles II.24.4 and II.24.5, on receipt of the documents referred to in Article II.23.2, the Agency shall pay to each beneficiary the amount due as interim payment within the time limit specified in Article 4.2.

This amount due as interim payment to a beneficiary shall be determined following approval of the request for interim payment submitted by the beneficiary and the accompanying documents and of the ASR for the reporting period or the two reporting periods covered. Approval of those documents shall not imply recognition of the regularity or of the authenticity, completeness and correctness of the declarations and information they contain.

The amount due as interim payment to a beneficiary shall be determined as follows:

the following amounts, which depend on the form of the grant, shall be added:

- (i) where, in accordance with Article 3(a), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of the reimbursement of eligible costs, the amount obtained by application of the reimbursement rate(s) specified in that Article to the eligible costs approved by the Agency for the concerned reporting period(s) and the corresponding categories of costs;
- (ii) where, in accordance with Article 3(b), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of a unit contribution, the amount obtained by multiplying the unit contribution specified in that Article by the actual number of units approved by the Agency for the concerned reporting period(s);
- (iii) where, in accordance with Article 3(c), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of a lump sum contribution, the lump sum specified in that Article, subject to approval by the Agency of the proper implementation during the concerned reporting period(s) of the corresponding tasks or part of the action in accordance with Annex I;
- (iv) where, in accordance with Article 3(d), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of a flat-rate contribution, the amount obtained by applying the flat rate referred to in that Article to the eligible costs or to the contribution accepted by the Agency for the concerned reporting period(s).

the interim payment shall clear 100% of the pre-financing payments already made for the reporting periods covered by the request for interim payment or previous interim payments and which have not been cleared against previous interim payments. The amount of the pre-financing payments to be cleared shall be deducted from the amount obtained in accordance with point (a);

the amount obtained in accordance with points (a) and (b) shall be limited to the difference between the percentage of the ceiling for pre-financing and interim payments set out in Article 4.1.3 and the total amount of the pre-financing and interim payments already made.

#### II.24.3 Payment of the balance

The payment of the balance, which may not be repeated, is intended to reimburse or cover after the end of the period set out in Article 2.2 the remaining part of the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiaries for its implementation. Where the total amount of earlier payments is greater than the final amount of the grant determined in accordance with Article II.25, the payment of the balance may take the form of a recovery as provided for by Article II.26.

Without prejudice to Articles II.24.4 and II.24.5, on receipt of the documents referred to in Article II.23.2, the Agency shall pay the amount due as the balance within the time limit specified in Article 4.2.

This amount shall be determined following approval of the request for payment of the balance and of the accompanying documents and in accordance with the fourth subparagraph. Approval of the request for payment of the balance and of the accompanying documents shall not imply recognition of the compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of the declarations and information they contain.

The amount due as the balance shall be determined by deducting, from the final amount of the grant determined for each beneficiary in accordance with Article II.25, the total amount of pre-financing and interim payments already made to the beneficiary.

#### II.24.4 Suspension of the time limit for payment

The Agency may suspend the time limit for payment specified in Article 4.2 at any time by formally notifying the beneficiary concerned that its request for payment cannot be met, either because it does not comply with the provisions of the Agreement, or because the appropriate supporting documents have not been produced, or because there is doubt about the eligibility of the costs declared in the financial statement.

The beneficiary concerned shall be notified as soon as possible of any such suspension, together with the reasons thereof.

Suspension shall take effect on the date when notification is sent by the Agency. The remaining payment period shall start to run again from the date on which the requested information or revised documents are received or the necessary further verification, including on-the-spot checks, is carried out. Where the suspension exceeds two months, the beneficiary concerned may request a decision by the Agency on whether the suspension is to be continued.

Where the time limit for payment has been suspended following the rejection of one of the ASRs, the final report or one of the financial statements provided for by Article II.23 and the new report or statement submitted is also rejected, the Agency reserves the right to terminate the Agreement or the participation of the beneficiary concerned in accordance with Article II.16.3.1(c), with the effects described in Article II.16.4.

#### II.24.5 Suspension of payments

II.24.5.1 The Agency may, at any time during the implementation of the Agreement, suspend the pre-financing payments, interim payments or payment of the balance for all beneficiaries, or suspend the pre-financing payments or interim payments for any one or several beneficiaries:

if the Agency has evidence that a beneficiary has committed substantial errors, irregularities or fraud in the award procedure or in the implementation of the grant, or if a beneficiary fails to comply with its obligations under the Agreement;

if the Agency has evidence that a beneficiary has committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations under other grants funded by the Union or by the European Atomic Energy Community which were awarded to that beneficiary under similar conditions, provided that those errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations have a material impact on this grant;

if the Agency suspects substantial errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations committed by a beneficiary in the award procedure or in the implementation of the Agreement and needs to verify whether they have actually occurred; or

following an evaluation of the progress of the project, in particular in the event of major delays in the implementation of the action; or

if the Agency does not receive all the documents required under Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community policy in the field of water, or any other relevant environmental legislation as listed in the application form (the section concerning compliance with Union policy on environmental protection).

II.24.5.2 Before suspending payments, the Agency shall formally notify all the beneficiaries of its intention to suspend payments, specifying the reasons thereof and, in the cases referred to in points (a), (b), (d) and (e) of Article II.24.5.1, the necessary conditions for resuming payments. The beneficiaries shall be invited to make any observations within 30 calendar days from receipt of this notification.

If, after examination of the observations submitted by the beneficiaries, the Agency decides to stop the procedure of payment suspension, the Agency shall formally notify all the beneficiaries thereof.

If no observations have been submitted or if, despite the observations submitted by the beneficiaries, the Agency decides to pursue the procedure of payment suspension, it may suspend payments by formally notifying all the beneficiaries thereof, specifying the reasons for the suspension and, in the cases referred to in points (a), (b), (d) and (e) of Article II.24.5.1, the definitive conditions for resuming payments or, in the case referred to in point (c) of Article II.24.5.1, the indicative date of completion of the necessary verification.

The suspension of payments shall take effect on the date when the notification is sent by the Agency.

In order to resume payments, the beneficiaries shall endeavour to meet the notified conditions as soon as possible and shall inform the Agency of any progress made in this respect.

The Agency shall, as soon as it considers that the conditions for resuming payments have been met or the necessary verification, including on-the-spot checks, has been carried out, formally notify all the beneficiaries thereof.

During the period of suspension of payments and without prejudice to the right to suspend the implementation of the action in accordance with Article II.15.1 or to terminate the Agreement or the participation of a beneficiary in accordance with Article II.16.1 and Article II.16.2, the beneficiary or beneficiaries concerned by the suspension of payments are not entitled to submit any requests for payments.

The corresponding requests for payments and supporting documents may be submitted as soon as possible after resumption of payments or may be included in the first request for payment due following resumption of payments in accordance with the schedule laid down in Article 4.1.

#### II.24.6 Notification of amounts due

The Agency shall formally notify the amounts due, specifying whether it is a further pre-financing payment, an interim payment or the payment of the balance. In the case of payment of the balance, it shall also specify the final amount of the grant determined in accordance with Article II.25.

#### II.24.7 Interest on late payment

On expiry of the time limits for payment specified in Articles 4.2 and II.24.1, and without prejudice to Articles II.24.4 and II.24.5, the beneficiaries are entitled to interest on late payment at the rate applied by the European Central Bank for its main refinancing operations in euros ("the reference rate"), plus three and a half points. The reference rate shall be the rate in force on the first day of the month in which the time limit for payment expires, as published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

The first subparagraph shall not apply to beneficiaries that are Member States of the Union, including regional and local government authorities and other public bodies acting in the name and on behalf of the Member State for the purpose of this Agreement.

The suspension of the time limit for payment in accordance with Article II.24.4 or of payment by the Agency in accordance with Article II.24.5 may not be considered as late payment.

Interest on late payment shall cover the period running from the day following the due date for payment, up to and including the date of actual payment as established in Article II.24.9. The interest payable shall not be considered for the purposes of determining the final amount of grant within the meaning of Article II.25.3.

By way of derogation from the first subparagraph, when the calculated interest is lower than or equal to EUR 200, it shall be paid to the beneficiary only upon request submitted within two months of receiving late payment.

#### II.24.8 Currency for payments

Payments by the Agency shall be made in euro.

#### II.24.9 Date of payment

Payments by the Agency shall be deemed to be effected on the date when they are debited to the Agency's account.

#### II.24.10 Costs of payment transfers

Costs of the payment transfers shall be borne in the following way:

costs of transfer charged by the bank of the Agency shall be borne by the Agency;

costs of transfer charged by the bank of a beneficiary shall be borne by the beneficiary;

all costs of repeated transfers caused by one of the parties shall be borne by the party which caused the repetition of the transfer.

#### II.24.11 Payments to the beneficiaries

The Agency shall make payments to each beneficiary.

## ARTICLE II.25 – DETERMINING THE FINAL AMOUNT OF THE GRANT

### II.25.1 Calculation of the final amount

Without prejudice to Articles II.25.2, II.25.3 and II.25.4, the final amount of the grant shall be determined for each beneficiary as follows:

where, in accordance with Article 3(a), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of the reimbursement of eligible costs, the amount obtained by application of the reimbursement rate(s) specified in that Article to the eligible costs approved by the Agency for the corresponding categories of costs;

where, in accordance with Article 3(b), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of a unit contribution, the amount obtained by multiplying the unit contribution specified in that Article by the actual number of units approved by the Agency;

where, in accordance with Article 3(c), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of a lump sum contribution, the lump sum specified in that Article, subject to approval by the Agency of the proper implementation of the corresponding tasks or part of the action in accordance with Annex I;

where, in accordance with Article 3(d), the grant to the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies takes the form of a flat-rate contribution, the amount obtained by applying the flat rate referred to in that Article to the eligible costs or to the contribution accepted by the Agency.

Where Article 3 provides for a combination of different forms of grant for the beneficiary, its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies, these amounts shall be added.

### II.25.2 Maximum amount

The total amount paid by the Agency to a beneficiary may in no circumstances exceed the maximum amount of the grant for that beneficiary specified in Article 3.

Where the amount determined in accordance with Article II.25.1 for a beneficiary exceeds this maximum amount, the final amount of the grant for that beneficiary shall be limited to the maximum amount specified in Article 3.

### II.25.3 No-profit rule and taking into account of receipts

II.25.3.1 The grant may not produce a profit for the beneficiaries, unless specified otherwise in the Special Conditions. For each beneficiary, "profit" shall mean a surplus of its receipts over its eligible costs.

II.25.3.2 The receipts to be taken into account are the receipts established, generated or confirmed on the date on which the request for payment of the balance is drawn up by the beneficiary, which fall within one of the following two categories:

income generated by its activities under the Agreement; or

financial contributions specifically assigned by the donors to the financing of its eligible costs reimbursed by the Agency in accordance with Article 3(a)(i).

II.25.3.3 The following shall not be considered as receipts to be taken into account for the purpose of verifying whether the grant produces a profit for the beneficiaries:

(a) financial contributions referred to in point (b) of Article II.25.3.2, which may be used by the beneficiaries to cover costs other than the eligible costs under the Agreement;

(b) financial contributions referred to in point (b) of Article II.25.3.2, the unused part of which is not due to the donors at the end of the period set out in Article 2.2.

II.25.3.4 The eligible costs to be taken into account are the eligible costs approved by the Agency for the categories of costs reimbursed in accordance with Article 3(a).

II.25.3.5 Where the final amount of the grant determined in accordance with Articles II.25.1 and II.25.2 would result in a profit for a beneficiary, the profit shall be deducted in proportion to the final rate of reimbursement of its actual eligible costs approved by the Agency for the categories of costs referred to in Article 3(a)(i). This final rate shall be calculated on the basis of the final amount of the grant for the beneficiary in the form referred to in Article 3(a)(i), as determined in accordance with Articles II.25.1 and II.25.2.

II.25.4 Reduction for poor, partial or late implementation, or breach of contractual obligations

The Agency may reduce the maximum grant amount per beneficiary set out in Article 3 if the action is not implemented properly in accordance with Annex I (i.e. if it has not been implemented or has been implemented poorly, partially or late), or if a beneficiary fails to comply with any other obligations under this Agreement.

This includes the case where the Agency does not receive all the documents required under Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, Directive

2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community policy in the field of water, or any other relevant environmental legislation as listed in the application form (the section concerning compliance with Union policy on environmental protection).

The amount of the reduction will be proportionate to the degree to which the action has been implemented improperly or to the seriousness of the breach.

Before the Agency reduces the grant, it must send a formal notification to the beneficiary concerned:

informing it of:

its intention to reduce the maximum amount of the grant;

the amount by which it intends to reduce the grant;

the reasons for reduction;

inviting it to submit observations within 30 calendar days of receiving the formal notification.

If the Agency does not receive any observations or decides to pursue reduction despite the observations it has received, it will send a formal notification informing the beneficiary concerned of its decision.

If the grant is reduced, the Agency must calculate the reduced grant amount by deducting the amount of the reduction (calculated in proportion to the improper implementation of the action or to the seriousness of the breach of obligations) from the maximum amount of the grant.

The final amount of the grant will be the lower of the following two:

the amount determined in accordance with Article II.25.1, II.25.2 and II.25.3; or

the reduced grant amount determined in accordance with Article II.25.4.

## ARTICLE II.26 – RECOVERY

### II.26.1 Recovery at the time of payment of the balance

Where the payment of the balance for a beneficiary takes the form of a recovery, the Agency shall formally notify the beneficiary concerned of its intention to recover the amount unduly paid:

specifying the amount due and the reasons for recovery;

inviting the beneficiary concerned to make any observations within a specified period.

If no observations have been submitted or if, despite the observations submitted by the beneficiary concerned, the Agency decides to pursue the recovery procedure, the Agency may confirm recovery by formally notifying to the beneficiary concerned a debit note (“debit note”), specifying the terms and the date for payment.

If the beneficiary concerned does not repay the Agency by the date specified in the debit note, the Agency or the Commission shall recover the amount due from the beneficiary in accordance with Article II.26.3.

#### II.26.2 Recovery after payment of the balance

Where an amount is to be recovered in accordance with Articles II.27.6, II.27.7 and II.27.8, the beneficiary concerned by the audit or OLAF findings shall repay the Agency the amount in question.

Before recovery, the Agency shall formally notify the beneficiary concerned of its intention to recover the amount unduly paid:

specifying the amount due (including any amount unduly paid by the Agency as a contribution towards the costs incurred by its affiliated entities or its implementing bodies) and the reasons for recovery;

inviting the beneficiary concerned to make any observations within a specified period.

If no observations have been submitted or if, despite the observations submitted by the beneficiary concerned, the Agency decides to pursue the recovery procedure, the Agency may confirm recovery by formally notifying to the beneficiary concerned a debit note (“debit note”), specifying the terms and the date for payment.

If the beneficiary concerned does not repay the Agency by the date specified in the debit note, the Agency or the Commission shall recover the amount due from the beneficiary in accordance with Article II.26.3.

#### II.26.3 Recovery procedure failing repayment by the date specified in the debit note

If payment has not been made by the date specified in the debit note, the Agency or the Commission shall recover the amount due:

(a) by offsetting it against any amounts owed to the beneficiary concerned by the Commission or an executive agency (from the Union or the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) budget) (“offsetting”); in exceptional circumstances, justified by the necessity to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Agency may recover by offsetting before the due date; the beneficiary’s prior consent shall not be required; an action

may be brought against such offsetting before the General Court of the European Union pursuant to Article 263 TFEU;

(b) by drawing on the financial guarantee where provided for in accordance with Article 4.1 (“drawing on the financial guarantee”);

(c) where provided for in the Special Conditions, by holding the beneficiaries jointly and severally liable;

(d) by taking legal action in accordance with Article II.18.2 or with the Special Conditions or by adopting an enforceable decision in accordance with Article II.18.3.

#### II.26.4 Interest on late payment

If payment has not been made by the date set out in the debit note, the amount due shall bear interest at the rate established in Article II.24.7. Interest on late payment shall cover the period running from the day following the due date for payment, up to and including the date when the Agency or the Commission actually receives payment in full of the outstanding amount.

Any partial payment shall first be appropriated against charges and interest on late payment and then against the principal.

#### II.26.5 Bank charges

Bank charges incurred in connection with the recovery of the sums owed to the Agency shall be borne by the beneficiary concerned except where Directive 2007/64/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007 on payment services in the internal market amending Directives 97/7/EC, 2002/65/EC, 2005/60/EC and 2006/48/EC and repealing Directive 97/5/EC applies.

### ARTICLE II.27 – CHECKS, AUDITS AND EVALUATION

#### II.27.1 Technical and financial checks, audits, interim and final evaluations

The Commission or the Agency may carry out technical and financial checks and audits to determine that the beneficiaries are implementing the action properly and are complying with the obligations under the Agreement. It may also check the statutory records of the beneficiaries for the purpose of periodic assessments of lump sum, unit cost or flat-rate amounts.

Information and documents provided in the framework of checks or audits shall be treated on a confidential basis.

In addition, the Commission or the Agency may carry out interim or final evaluation of the impact of the action measured against the objective of the Union programme concerned, in order to assess whether the objectives, including those relating to environmental protection, have been attained.

Checks, audits or evaluations made by the Commission or the Agency may be carried out either directly by its own staff or by any other outside body authorised to do so on its behalf.

Such checks, audits or evaluations may be initiated during the implementation of the Agreement and for a period of five years starting from the date of payment of the balance. This period shall be limited to three years if the maximum amount specified in Article 3 is not more than EUR 60 000.

The check, audit or evaluation procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the letter of the Commission or the Agency announcing it.

If the audit is carried out on an affiliated entity or implementing body, the beneficiary concerned must inform that affiliated entity or implementing body.

#### II.27.2 Duty to keep documents

The beneficiaries shall keep all original documents, especially accounting and tax records, stored on any appropriate medium, including digitalised originals when they are authorised by their respective national law and under the conditions laid down therein, for a period of five years starting from the date of payment of the balance.

This period shall be limited to three years if the maximum amount specified in Article 3 is not more than EUR 60 000.

The periods set out in the first and second subparagraphs shall be longer if there are on-going audits, appeals, litigation or pursuit of claims concerning the grant, including in the case referred to in Article II.27.7. In such cases, the beneficiaries shall keep the documents until such audits, appeals, litigation or pursuit of claims are closed.

#### II.27.3 Obligation to provide information

The beneficiaries shall provide any information, including information in electronic format, requested by the Commission or the Agency or by any other outside body authorised by it in the framework of a check, audit or evaluation.

In case a beneficiary does not comply with the obligations set out in the first subparagraph, the Commission or the Agency may consider:

(a) any cost insufficiently substantiated by information provided by the beneficiary as ineligible;

(b) any unit, lump sum or flat-rate contribution insufficiently substantiated by information provided by the beneficiary as undue.

#### II.27.4 On-the-spot visits

During an on-the-spot visit, the beneficiaries shall allow Commission or Agency staff and outside personnel authorised by the Commission or the Agency to have access to the sites and premises where the action is or was carried out, and to all the necessary information, including information in electronic format.

They shall ensure that the information is readily available at the moment of the on-the-spot visit and that information requested is handed over in an appropriate form.

In case a beneficiary refuses to provide access to the sites, premises and information in accordance with the first and second subparagraphs, the Commission or the Agency may consider:

(a) any cost insufficiently substantiated by information provided by the beneficiary as ineligible;

(b) any unit, lump sum or flat-rate contribution insufficiently substantiated by information provided by the beneficiary as undue.

#### II.27.5 Contradictory audit procedure

On the basis of the findings made during the audit, a provisional report (“draft audit report”) shall be drawn up. It shall be sent by the Commission or the Agency or its authorised representative to the beneficiary concerned, which shall have 30 days from the date of receipt to submit observations. The final report (“final audit report”) shall be sent to the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of expiry of the time limit for submission of observations.

#### II.27.6 Effects of audit findings

On the basis of the final audit findings, the Commission or the Agency may take the measures which it considers necessary, including recovery at the time of payment of the balance or after payment of the balance of all or part of the payments made by it, in accordance with Article II.26.

In the case of final audit findings made after the payment of the balance, the amount to be recovered shall correspond to the difference between the revised final amount of the grant for the beneficiary concerned, determined in accordance with Article II.25, and the total

amount paid to the beneficiary concerned under the Agreement for the implementation of its activities.

#### II.27.7 Correction of systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations

II.27.7.1 The Commission or the Agency may extend audit findings from other grants to this grant if:

- (a) the beneficiary is found, on the basis of an audit of other EU or Euratom grants awarded to it under similar conditions, to have committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant; and
- (b) the final audit report containing the findings of the systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations is formally received by the beneficiary, together with the list of grants affected by the findings, within the period referred to in Article II.27.1.

The extension of findings may lead to:

- (a) the rejection of costs as ineligible;
- (b) reduction of the grant as provided for in Article II.25.4;
- (c) recovery of undue amounts as provided for in Article II.26;
- (d) suspension of payments as provided for in Article II.24.5;
- (e) suspension of the action implementation as provided for in Article II.15.2;
- (f) termination as provided for in Article II.16.3.

II.27.7.2 The Commission or the Agency must send a formal notification to the beneficiary concerned informing it of the systemic or recurrent errors and of its intention to extend the audit findings, together with the list of grants affected.

- (a) If the findings concern eligibility of costs, the procedure is as follows:

The formal notification must include:

- (i) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings;
- (ii) a request to submit revised financial statements for all grants affected;

(iii) where possible, the correction rate for extrapolation established by the Commission or the Agency to calculate the amounts to be rejected on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations, if the beneficiary concerned:

- considers that the submission of revised financial statements is not possible or practicable; or
- will not submit revised financial statements.

The beneficiary concerned has 60 calendar days from when it receives the formal notification to submit observations and revised financial statements or to propose a duly substantiated alternative correction method. This period may be extended by the Commission or the Agency in justified cases.

If the beneficiary concerned submits revised financial statements that take account of the findings, the Commission or the Agency will determine the amount to be corrected on the basis of those revised statements.

If the beneficiary proposes an alternative correction method and the Commission or the Agency accepts it, the Commission or the Agency must send a formal notification to the beneficiary concerned informing it:

- (i) that it accepts the alternative method;
- (ii) of the revised eligible costs determined by applying this method.

Otherwise the Commission or the Agency must send a formal notification to the beneficiary concerned informing it:

- (i) that it does not accept the observations or the alternative method proposed;
- (ii) of the revised eligible costs determined by applying the extrapolation method initially notified to the beneficiary.

In the case of systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations found after the payment of the balance, the amount to be recovered shall correspond to the difference between the revised final amount of the grant for the beneficiary concerned, determined in accordance with Article II.25 on the basis of the revised eligible costs declared by the beneficiary and approved by the Commission or the Agency or on the basis of the revised eligible costs after extrapolation, and the total amount paid to the beneficiary concerned under the Agreement for the implementation of its activities;

(b) If the findings concern improper implementation or a breach of another obligation (i.e. where ineligible costs cannot serve as a basis for determining the amount to be corrected), the procedure is as follows:

The Commission or the Agency shall formally notify the beneficiary concerned of the correction flat rate to be applied to the maximum amount of the grant specified in Article 3 or to part of it, according to the principle of proportionality, and invite the beneficiary to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings.

The beneficiary concerned shall have 60 days from the date of receipt of the notification to submit observations and to propose a duly substantiated alternative flat rate.

If the Commission or the Agency accepts the alternative flat rate proposed by the beneficiary, it shall formally notify the beneficiary concerned thereof and correct the grant amount by applying the accepted alternative flat rate.

If no observations have been submitted or if the Commission or the Agency does not accept the observations or the alternative flat rate proposed by the beneficiary, the Commission or the Agency shall formally notify the beneficiary concerned thereof and correct the grant amount by applying the flat rate initially notified to the beneficiary.

In the case of systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations found after the payment of the balance, the amount to be recovered shall correspond to the difference between the revised final amount of the grant for the beneficiary concerned after flat-rate correction and the total amount paid to the beneficiary concerned under the Agreement for the implementation of its activities.

#### II.27.8 Checks and inspections by OLAF

The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) shall have the same rights as the Commission and the Agency, notably right of access, for the purpose of checks and investigations.

By virtue of Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96<sup>8</sup> of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities and Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013<sup>9</sup> of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), OLAF may also carry out on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with the procedures laid down by Union law for the protection of the financial interests of the Union against fraud and other irregularities.

Where appropriate, OLAF findings may lead to recovery by the Agency. They may also lead to criminal prosecution under national law.

#### II.27.9 Checks and audits by the European Court of Auditors

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<sup>8</sup> OJ L 292, 15.11.1996, p.2

<sup>9</sup> OJ L 248, 18.09.2013, p.1



HELLENIC REPUBLIC ASSET  
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The European Court of Auditors shall have the same rights as the Agency and the Commission, notably right of access, for the purpose of checks and audits