

**SUDOE**  
2014-2020

Programa de Cooperación Territorial  
Programme de Coopération Territoriale  
Programa de Cooperação Territorial  
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# **EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION**

**2014-2020**

# **SOUTHWEST EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROGRAMME**

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## SECTION 1

**Strategy for the Operational Programme's contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the achieving of economic, social, and territorial cohesion**

**1.1 Strategy for the Operational Programme's contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the achieving of economic, social, and territorial cohesion**

**1.1.1 Description of the programme's strategy for contributing to the delivery of the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the achieving of economic, social, and territorial cohesion.**

The Southwest European (*Sudoeste Europeo*, SUDOE) Cooperation Programme is developed by taking as a basis the 2020 Europe Strategy for the Operational Programme's contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the three growth models (smart, sustainable and inclusive) that are the guiding principles of the 2014-2020 programme. In its turn the Programme has accumulated the experience of the four previous generations of programmes in its knowledge of the territory, its players, and the understanding of the development modes of its projects.

The strategy of the 2014-2020 SUDOE Programme is developed initially from a group of main elements, which will be developed later throughout this section and the remaining ones of the Programme:

- Territorial (socioeconomic) diagnosis of the eligible area to establish the challenges and prior priorities of the space.
- Revision of the complementarity of actions with the regional operating programmes in each of the NUTS 2 regions, of the national multiregional programmes, and of the transnational and cross-border cooperation programmes that partially operate in the eligible territory.
- The intervention proposals and the possibility of carrying out actions linked to the Partnership Agreements of the four participating member states.
- The capitalisation of the results of the previous programming periods, in particular of the 2007-2013 period.
- The participative process established with the agents of the territory, in particular of the surveys carried out in 2012 and 2013 (on the type of potential actions and the systems for initiating them) by the managing authority and the national authorities in their respective territories.
- The establishing of the logical framework of intervention as a conclusion of the above points and the result of the agreements among the participating states, taking as a basis for development the analysis of the feasibility of the actions considered optimum for their initiation in the Programme.

In this way the logical framework of the transnational programme devotes special attention to the development of actions that are linked as a priority to the aspects affecting intelligent and sustainable growth. These growth models give a greater added value of transnational cooperation compared with other interventions that may be carried out individually by the regions or in the fields of cross-border cooperation, such as the labour market, physical communications, or programmes of social inclusion and training. Emphasis is likewise given to the need to work to highlight the endogenous potential of the space and the concentration of investments in an extensive space and with a relatively low endowment of funds, so as to avoid financial dispersal in the territory and to achieve greater visibility of the results associated with the Programme and a greater impact.

For its part, the territorial diagnosis has emphasised the situation of SUDOE regions with development models that vary greatly among themselves as to their potential, their specialisation elements, and their level of development. The strategy for this programming period has also assumed the principle of transnational cooperation as a key element to the achieving of greater economic and territorial cohesion in the SUDOE inner space. The aim is to boost the capacity of several regions to act as leading regions in specialised actions, making use of the experience acquired and the regional poles of development and innovation that have been conceived in recent years.



Finally, it should be emphasised that the Programme puts its faith in the concentration of financial resources in two essential principles:

- The internal and external **Competitiveness** of technological centres and companies (SMEs) by means of the support of the common agreed development of knowledge production centres and their application in SMEs by joining TO1 (TO1 = Thematic Objective 1) and TO3 on the same intervention axis in order to transmit this bid for integration to the territorial players.
- The **Sustainability** of the growth and development of the SUDOE space by means of the integration of the strictly environmental parameters of TO6 with the prevention of natural risks of TO5 and the energy efficiency actions of OT4, which maintain a high degree of complementarity and answer the need for acting as a whole with the resources available.

The following points are presented in five sections that constitute the sequence of the intervention logic of the 2014-2020 SUDOE Operating Programme (*Programa Operativo*, PO), which is expressed synthetically in the previous paragraphs.

- Firstly a brief **synthesis of the** socioeconomic, environmental, and territorial **diagnosis** of the SUDOE space is presented with the identification of its main potential values and challenges. This characterisation is complemented by a brief analysis of the situation of the SUDOE space compared with the various goals of Europe 2020, verifying its greater or lesser contribution to the intelligent, sustainable, and integrating growth of the European Union.
- Secondly the **threats and opportunities** of the SUDOE space are included in accordance with the Europe 2020 strategy.
- Thirdly the **experience of capitalisation** during the 2007-2013 period is analysed, identifying its strategic orientations and the good practices learnt that should be maintained and promoted during the new programming period.
- As from these three analytical dimensions the **principles and premises** on which the intervention logic of the 2014-2020 SUDOE OP can be defined. These principles and premises are inspired by the frameworks of strategic and legislative reference of the 2014-2020 programme at a European level and by transnational cooperation as an essential principle of the 2014-2020 SUDOE OP.
- Finally, the fifth step summarises the **conditions of the selection and justification of the thematic objectives** and investment priorities, thus closing the presentation cycle of the intervention logic of the 2014-2020 SUDOE OP.

## Characterisation of the SUDOE cooperation space

This section gives a brief summary of the main territorial and socioeconomic characteristics of the SUDOE cooperation space, which allow the understanding of the historical and current situation of the territory, together with the identification of its main challenges and aspects of its development potential.

From a **demographic and territorial** point of view the SUDOE space is characterised by the coastal-inland pairing. There is therefore an initial differentiation between the areas on or near the coast (which have the largest population density and most of the metropolitan centres such as Lisbon, Oporto, Barcelona, Valencia, Bilbao, and Bordeaux) and the inland areas, which contain most of the rural spaces in the territory (such as Auvergne in France; Extremadura, Castilla La Mancha, Castilla-León, and Aragon in Spain; and the Centre and the Alentejo in Portugal), which have a low population density and an ageing population and in which average-sized or small towns predominate. Madrid and Toulouse are the two exceptions of major metropolitan areas in the interior areas of the SUDOE territory.

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In economic terms the SUDOE space (in particular in the peninsular regions of Portugal and Spain) has been particularly affected by the negative effects of the European economic and financial crisis. This is reflected in negative figures (or close to zero) for economic growth in the bulk of the regions in recent years, and in the stagnation (or even reversion) of the process of convergence with European averages (in terms of the GNP *per capita*), as can clearly be seen in the case of the northern region of Portugal.

The main negative effect of the crisis on the population has been the sharp increase in unemployment in general throughout the SUDOE space. Unemployment can be considered to be one of the main social and economic challenges of this cooperation space. It has greatly affected Portugal and especially Spain, where regions such as Andalusia, Extremadura, and Castilla La Mancha have recorded exponential growth to attain very high levels of unemployment (28%, 33%, and 35% respectively), which is well above the SUDOE average (17%) or the European average (10.4%). For their part, the French regions of the SUDOE territory have the lowest unemployment rates (Limousin with 7.2% and Midi-Pyrénées and Poitou-Charentes with 8.8%). There is clearly a difference between the

peninsular territory and the most northern SUDOE regions in which the latter may help the remainder in the modes for facing this major problem.

However, there are also peninsular regions in the SUDOE space that have shown themselves to be more resilient to these effects of the crisis, such as the Basque Country and Navarra in Spain, which together with others such as Aquitaine and Midi-Pyrénées in France show a strong economic, industrial, scientific, and population dynamism. These regions have the lowest unemployment rates in the SUDOE space and the highest levels of R+D expenses, together with some of the best indicators as to the GNP *per capita*.

The economic structure of the SUDOE space *in relation to the European average* is characterised by the greater relative participation of the **service sector**, while in contrast to the average European structure the **primary sector** is more highly represented in terms of employment and economic participation in the GNP. Finally, there is less relative participation of the **industrial** sector in the GNP of the SUDOE territory. If these indicators are analysed in a holistic manner they can be seen to be fully in keeping with the SUDOE characteristic of the greater territorial rurality and geographical dispersal of a significant group of SUDOE regions, especially in inland areas.

Moreover, this productive structure of the transnational space is almost exclusively to be found in SMEs (which represent 95% of the total number of existing companies). They are mainly devoted to the service sector (between 75% and 80% of the total) and are highly relevant in the generating of employment. SMEs for their part have a limited capacity for innovation and for penetrating foreign markets. In addition, they are more vulnerable to the growing problems of financial liquidity owing to the difficulties of access to credit and financing that have existed since the start of the crisis.

Despite everything, there are regions in the SUDOE space that occupy prominent positions and even are European leaders in terms of industrial production in specific sectors, which is the case of Midi-Pyrénées (the aeronautical and aerospace industry), the northern region of Portugal (textiles and footwear), and Navarra (renewable energies). These regions are capable of acting as specialised development and traction poles for the remainder of the SUDOE regions.

Industrial production is based on the one hand on business cooperation in the form of clusters, specialised associations of professionals and companies, and poles of competitiveness and of excellence. For instance, this is the case of the energy production of Navarra (with the *Cluster Solar de Navarra* and leading companies), of the automotive industry in the Basque Country (ACICAE), of the health industry in Aquitaine and Midi-Pyrénées (the Cancer-Bio-Health pole), etc..

Moreover, this production is also based on high-value or intensive knowledge activities; this aspect leads to high investment in R+D in the regions where these sectors are located.

Although the average level of spending on R+D of the SUDOE space as a whole is still well below the European average, significant progress has been made in recent years with the regions of Midi-Pyrénées, Languedoc-Roussillon, Lisbon, Navarra, and the Basque Country to the fore. All these regions are far above the respective national and European average levels of spending on R+D, and are relatively close to achieving the goal established in the 2020 Europe strategy (an investment of 3% of the GNP on innovation).

Considering the level of spending on R+D, the existence is also confirmed of clearly differentiated systems among the various regions of the SUDOE space as far as the origin of spending on innovation and the predominance of each group of players is concerned, namely:

- The leading regions on a transnational level are those that also lead private investment in R+D (Midi-Pyrénées, the Basque Country, and Navarra);
- The weight of public participation in investment in R+D is relatively greater in the Spanish regions (especially in Madrid, Extremadura, and Cataluña);
- The component of spending on R+D by universities acquires greater relevance in the Portuguese regions (such as the North and the Alentejo).

The diagnosis carried out revealed the existence of a direct link between the highest innovating capacity and that of the transfer of knowledge, on the one hand, and the highest economic dynamism, mobility, and the best employment figures on the other. The Programme hopes to have an effect on the support for these transnational capacities of the territory, allowing active and passive employment policies (both regional and national) to play a complementary role, establishing a system of mutual support in the concentration of resources.

From an **environmental** point of view the SUDOE space is characterised by its great ecological, climatic, and territorial diversity, which gives it many advantages for the carrying out of activities connected with conservation and the environmental and tourist promotion of the territory. A significant percentage of the SUDOE space is part of the 2000 Nature Network (*Red Natura 2000*) (over 20% of the total surface area). It should however be taken particularly into account that this area is very fragile. It includes a large number of districts facing threats deriving from urban growth and an increasing population, pollution, and agricultural overexploitation, and also natural recurrent risks common to the transnational area (fires, earthquakes, drought, erosion, desertification, and floods).

**Water resources** constitute an environmental asset of growing importance in the SUDOE space. These resources have a dual component both in the generation of clean energy and in the need for guaranteeing supplies for humans, animals, and plants and the maintenance and improvement, if appropriate, of the quality of the water. In general the drinking water of the SUDOE space is of good quality. The transnational space holds large water reserves especially in France (for instance in the Auvergne), although they are highly localised and

specific rather than of a general nature. Over most of the territory the SUDOE space is characterised by a scarcity of water and cyclical difficulties in guaranteeing supply to the population, agriculture, or industry. This situation is becoming more and more frequent in the southern area of the cooperation space, where problems of desertification and soil erosion are increasing. Two thirds of the surface area of Spain (with the exception of the Atlantic/Cantabrian strip and the valleys of the major river basins) are thus characterised by arid or semi-arid areas or have low humidity. In Portugal the inland areas of the Alentejo and the Algarve are at high risk of drought and desertification.

Water resources thus constitute one of the major challenges as to how to act regarding natural risks within the SUDOE space. As a result of the great variability in climate of the space (oceanic, Mediterranean, continental-Mediterranean, transition, and mountain climates), the SUDOE territory is simultaneously facing risks of drought/fire/floods throughout its extent depending on the time of year and even at the same time.

The areas of influence of the major river basins of the Iberian peninsula (Duero, Tajo, Ebro, and Guadiana) are the most affected by the risk of flooding, while Languedoc-Roussillon and Poitou-Charentes (Xynthia) are the French regions of the SUDOE space most at risk for the same reason. In addition, mountain areas all over the SUDOE space are likely to experience flooding during the seasons of heavy rain or thaws.

It is anticipated that climatic changes will have a considerable affect on the whole of the SUDOE space albeit in different ways. In Portugal a greater impact from floods is expected, particularly in the north of the country, as a result of the concentration of precipitation in winter and the increasing frequency of heavy rainfall together with the degradation of the quality of the water, especially in the Alentejo and the Algarve owing to the increased temperatures and reduced rainfall in summer, spring, and autumn. In Spain a greater impact is anticipated in the peninsular southeast (less precipitation), the Guadiana basin, the Ebro valley, and the archipelago of the Balearics to add to the already considerable water problems. In the SUDOE region of France winters with heavy rainfall are expected in the west and hotter summers in the Mediterranean south. For these reasons the effects of climatic change have become associated with natural risks for the SUDOE space.

On the other hand, the SUDOE space has ample physical capabilities and enough previous work experience to become a European point of reference on renewable energy, both from the point of view of energy production and from that of the final consumption of energy by both homes and industry. Owing to its natural characteristics the space has great potential for energy production as from a diversified energy mix with renewable sources such as solar, wind, hydraulic and biomass energy. There are numerous examples in the SUDOE territory of this aspect of the Iberian peninsula. This is the case of Portugal, which obtains 43% of its energy production from renewable sources, and also that of Spain, the levels for which are also above the European average in renewable energy production (30% compared with

24.9% for the EU). For their part, the French regions included in the SUDOE space are the main contributors to the production of renewable energy in France (Languedoc-Roussillon, for example, generates 20% of the French production of photovoltaic electricity and Aquitaine 11% of the national production of energy from biomass). There is therefore a great capacity for cooperation between the leading SUDOE regions for each type of renewable energy.

In terms of **accessibility and transport**, the SUDOE space is generally satisfactory, although it is still necessary to encourage intermodal connections (the intermodality of transport systems) and to improve land communications between frontier zones of Spain and Portugal.

The multimodal accessibility index of the territories of the SUDOE area is lower than the EU average apart from certain coastal areas of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. These multimodal access limitations are more acute in particular in inland border areas of Spain and Portugal, especially in the Alto Tras-os-Montes/Zamora and Beira Interior Sul/Salamanca frontier areas and in the Pyrenees.

In general the SUDOE regions have good density indexes for infrastructures and overland communication, such as main roads and major railway lines. They also enjoy good connections with the main commercial ports on both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic coasts, which are now affected by regional policies and programmes. Mobility still remains difficult in certain areas, above all in the northeast frontier zones between Portugal and Spain and between Spain and France, which is the result of the scarcity of crossing points or the complexity of the geography of the territory.

In the **field of education** it was found that most areas in the SUDOE territory, with Spain and France in the lead, have achieved the goal of the 2020 Europe strategy of 40% of the population aged between 30 and 34 having higher education qualifications by 2020. Portugal however lags behind with 27.2%. The Programme contemplates action with national programmes to reduce this difference and notes that an essential added value in transnational cooperation is not currently appreciated. In general the regions with greater economic dynamism and better economic indicators constitute formative structures with good levels of higher education, although this does not go far enough. Examples of this situation are regions such as the Basque Country (61.3% of the population aged between 30 and 34 with higher education studies), Midi-Pyrénées (54%), Asturias (50.4%), Navarra (50.1%), and Madrid (49.4%). In the case of Portugal the regions in the North of the country and Lisbon have the best figures (32% and 28.7% respectively), although they are still below the European average (35.8%). These last regions have a dense population and a wide range of institutions of higher education.

On the other hand, as far as the school dropout rate is concerned the SUDOE space is still a long way off the goal of 10% of the 2020 Europe strategy. The levels of some Spanish and Portuguese regions are certainly alarming, being at around 40% or even higher, such as Ceuta, the Balearic Islands, and Murcia in Spain; or the Northern region and the Algarve in Portugal. In contrast, the French regions of Midi-Pyrénées and Aquitaine have already reached the 2020 Europe goal, i.e. their school dropout rate is less than 10%. The cooperation space therefore has a common challenge, although several regions are capable of leading a process of improvement and sectoral development.

### Challenges and opportunities of the SUDOE space as regards the 2020 Europe strategy

This section gives a comparative analysis of the SUDOE space regarding compliance with the goals of the 2020 Europe strategy, identifying challenges and opportunities for the intelligent, sustainable, and integrating growth of the region that can be reflected in the intervention logic of the 2014-2020 SUDOE PO.

The promotion of intelligent growth, in the form of encouraging an economy concentrating on knowledge and innovation and also on the capacity to transfer and absorb this knowledge, is a priority challenge for the SUDOE space for the 2014-2020 period. The current context shows that significant progress has been made in this field regarding the start of the previous programming period. The Programme has made a great contribution in recent years by strengthening its strategy for the R+D+I sector; this needs to be consolidated, capitalised on, and promoted for the 2014-2020 period.

Through transnational cooperation the SUDOE PO can specifically contribute to the reduction of the asymmetries that still persist in this field between the various regions of the space. Likewise it can promote the excellence of networks, of players, and of projects and results that are already successful at a regional level, thus catapulting us onto the European and international scene. This bid for the economy based on knowledge and innovation will have a direct influence on the generating of qualified employment within the space through training and the encouraging of endogenous development. In this way it will help the space to face one of the major challenges to integrating growth and social cohesion at a transnational level as has previously been identified: the high level of employment, in particular among young people aged under 30.

As has already been mentioned, the SUDOE territory considered as a whole is below the European average in terms of spending on R+D+I and a long way off the investment goal of 3% of the GNP as established in the 2020 Europe strategy. Moreover, an intra-territorial imbalance has been found in this respect, with a marked difference between certain regions regardless of the State in which they are located. On the one hand therefore we have Midi-



Pyrénées, Languedoc-Roussillon, Lisbon, Navarra, and the Basque Country, which have already achieved or are very close to achieving this goal; and on the other most Spanish and Portuguese regions. Difficulties have also been found concerning the level of the exploitation and the transfer of technology and knowledge.

The boosting of an economy based on knowledge and innovation has also to do with the level of qualification of the population. In this case, on average the transnational scenario is almost identical to that recorded at a European level in terms of the population aged between 30 and 34 with higher education (some 35% in both cases) and relatively encouraging regarding reaching the goal established by the 2020 Europe strategy (40%). However, as has been mentioned in the synthesis of the territorial diagnosis, imbalances occur between regions within the space in which the Programme has the capacity to intervene by placing the players on this subject on a network, making use of specific leaderships that are specialised by themes.

Nevertheless, some regions were also found to have a dynamic and organised industrial structure based on clusters and innovation poles. These structures are capable of generating added value to industrial production and of achieving a return on investment in R+D for services and innovative products for the market. This scenario means that some regions of the SUDOE space stand out sectorally and are ready to assume a leading role at a European level in certain sectors (renewable energies, the aerospace industry, the automotive supplier industry, textiles, and footwear, for example).

Promoting the economy based on knowledge and innovation in the SUDOE space also implies stimulating social cohesion and the integrating growth of the regions included in the cooperation area. In this field one of the main challenges of the SUDOE space is encouraging the creation of employment so as to achieve the goal of the 2020 Europe strategy of an employment rate of 75%. The actions of the Programme tend towards the development of a system that allows the encouragement of the generating of employment by the pertinent players, as the Programme lacks the financial means of facing a challenge of this magnitude. On the other hand, there are regional, national, and European Union players and initiatives that directly treat aspects of employment and unemployment together with direct incentives for them to create employment. The activities of the Programme should start from the existing structures, resources, and centres of knowledge and encourage their work reinforced on the Internet, together with the optimisation of the continuous adaptation of these elements to SMEs and the incorporation of knowledge and innovation to the same.

The 2020 Europe strategy also encourages models of sustainable growth by means of a low-carbon economy that is efficient in its use of resources, protects the environment, mitigates its impact, and manages the associated risks. Owing to its endogenous characteristics and the potential of its territory and its socioeconomic dynamics, the sustainable aspect of growth represents an opportunity for relative specialisation and differentiation of the SUDOE space on a European level, as has been mentioned.

In this context the differentiated role played by the SUDOE space at a European level in the **renewable energy sector** should be emphasised. Not only does the cooperation area have privileged natural characteristics (wind, an abundance of direct sunlight, waterfalls), it has also encouraged innovation and productive infrastructures in this sector. As a consequence Spain and Portugal have much higher levels of the production and final consumption of energy from renewable sources than the European average, and for their part the figures for the French regions of the SUDOE are above the national average. Portugal has even complied with its 2020 Europe goal for the consumption of renewable energy as part of energy consumption as a whole (20%), and Spain and the French regions of the SUDOE are well on the way to complying with this objective.

On the other hand, the marked rural character of many of the regions of the SUDOE space, the anthropic pressures existing in the main metropolitan centres and tourist destinations, and the richness and extent of their natural heritage and their biodiversity (shown in the wide cover of the *Red Natura 2000*, for example) represent a big challenge in terms of the prevention and management of natural risks, such as drought, desertification and soil erosion, forest fires, and cyclical and seasonal floods.

### The experience of the 2007-2013 programme

A brief analysis of the SUDOE programme for this earlier period will allow the drawing of relevant and useful conclusions that have been helpful in the preparation of the programme for the 2014-2020 period.

In this context it must firstly be emphasised that as a result of the intermediate assessment of the Programme the second part of the period was reprogrammed. The situation of the cooperation types, the results of the different themes, and the Programme's putting its faith in the concentration of resources so as to gain more visibility and more notable effects have led to a reformulation of the effort and the budget in the first two axes of the Programme:

1. Promoting of **innovation** and the constitution of stable technological cooperation networks;
2. Improving sustainability for the protection and conservation of the **environment** and the natural surroundings of the SUDOE.

This meant taking resources away from the other two axes (related to accessibility and sustainable urban development) with lower indexes of execution and participation shown by the players of the territory.

As was previously pointed out, the reprogramming was justified in the report on the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Intermediate Assessment of the 2007-2013 SUDOE PO owing to the greater capacity for financial absorption achieved by these two axes of the Programme. This was reflected in the greater progress that has been made in terms of impact in the field of innovation and the environment, elements in which the agents taking part in the Programme recognised the strong influence of the SUDOE when responding to the existing problems and needs.

The execution data of the 2007-2013 SUDOE programme revealed the relative importance given in effect to Priority 1 (The promotion of innovation and the constitution of stable technological cooperation networks), which absorbed nearly 50% of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) aid approved and the total of approved projects. To be specific, projects on the transfer of technology covered nearly 25% of the total ERDF aid of the Programme, which shows their specific relevance and interest in the field of innovation.

For its part environmental cooperation, which represented 30% of the number of projects and of the ERDF aid approved between 2007 and 2013, spread the investment out more on specific themes, with risk prevention (8% of the total ERDF aid approved), energy efficiency, water management and distribution, and the protection of biodiversity (with 5% each) being the main themes supported by operations financed by the Programme.

In short, although the fields of R+D+I and the environment include different types of operations, they are those in which the greatest and most noticeable impact has been obtained from the financing granted by the Programme. Furthermore, they are also the thematic fields in which the beneficiaries perceive more directly the importance of the aid given by cooperation mechanisms such as the SUDOE.

## Principles and premises

A first starting point in the preparation of the 2014-2020 SUDOE programme from a strategic point of view is that of the work frameworks and possibilities offered by documents such as the Common Strategic Framework (*Marco Estratégico Común*, MEC), the Territorial Agenda of the European Union, and (EU) Regulations nos. 1303/2013, 1301/2013, and 1299/2013, among others. These documents identify a series of principles applicable to the operating programmes and those of territorial cooperation, as is the case of the SUDOE space.

An initial principle that stands out (essentially in the MEC and in the Territorial Agenda of the European Union) is that of the **joint and integrated management** of natural resources, of biodiversity, of natural risks, of adaptation to climatic change, and of the heritage and cultural values of the cooperation space.

A second principle (which is also included in the MEC) quoted is that of **smart interconnections**, with the encouraging of cooperation between companies, research centres and higher education institutions, and the supporting of innovative groups, centres of expertise, and business incubators, together with the supporting of good transnational practices of smart specialisation strategies.

A third relevant principle considered is that of the generating of economies of scale by means of cooperation and the shared use of infrastructures, equipment, and services.

These principles, together with the current socioeconomic and territorial context of the SUDOE space, its challenges and opportunities of the 2020 Europe strategy, and also the experience of the programming of previous periods, generate a series of premises that have served as sources for the drawing up of the intervention logic of the 2014-2020 SUDOE PO. These methodological reference bases propose the added value of transnational cooperation for the specific space of the SUDOE focussed on various specific aspects:

- ✓ **The concentration of investments** – taking into account the challenge of smart specialisation, it is considered that the 2014-2020 SUDOE PO should concentrate its efforts on areas and sectors in which the territory has competitive advantages and endogenous potential, either because of its intrinsic characteristics or because of the productive structure of the cooperation area.

- ✓ **The fight against asymmetries** – the SUDOE space includes regions with very different levels of economic and industrial development, of scientific and technological production, and of labour qualifications and employability, among other factors. The 2014-2020 SUDOE Programme expounds the encouraging of the rapprochement between these regions so as to facilitate the exchanging of experiences and the learning of good practices, and also the making of their contribution to the search for solutions to these imbalances.

- ✓ **The capitalisation of results from previous periods, in particular from 2007-2013** – during the previous period the SUDOE programme already included guidance on specialisation and thematic concentration and on resources through two main themes – *innovation* and the *environment*. As has been explained, this concentration was based on the results and the impact of the projects included in them, and also in the challenges and needs of the SUDOE spaces in these fields (the largest number of projects, the best structured, and the greatest assimilation of the ERDF). For 2014-2020 it has been considered beneficial to continue with the tendency of this line of specialisation, going more deeply into the development of areas of cooperation that have been shown to be successful, and putting faith in new cooperation areas allowed in the regulations, such as the competitiveness of SMEs which will allow the strengthening of competitiveness actions. These actions also reinforce the need indicated in the diagnosis to act on the labour market and the economic sectors in the interest of economic reactivation as a means to help to end the crisis that has had such a negative effect on the cooperation area.

- ✓ **Orientation towards endogenous capacities** – taking into account the generating of synergies and complementary factors of the regional Programmes and other cross-border or

national cooperation programmes (such as the Atlantic Space or the Mediterranean), it is considered that the SUDOE OP should pay special attention to the challenges of endogenous development with players, SMEs, and locations of the space itself. Nevertheless, the Programme will be receptive to the presentation of strategic projects or of capitalisation with other different cooperation spaces of the SUDOE.

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## The selection of thematic objectives and investment priorities

Taking into account the above principles and premises, a total of 5 thematic objectives/priority axes were chosen in two general intervention areas in the manner shown synthetically in the table below:

Intervention Area 1 Smart Development	Intervention Area 2 Sustainable Development
<p><u>Axis 1 - OT1: Promoting research, technological development, and innovation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI 1b</li> </ul> <p><i>Encouraging business investment in R+I, the developing of links and synergies between companies, research and development centres, and the higher education sector</i></p>	<p><u>Axis 3 - OT4: Encouraging the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI 4c</li> </ul> <p><i>Encouraging energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in public infrastructures, including public buildings and the housing sector</i></p>
<p><u>Axis 2 - OT3: Improving the competitiveness of SMEs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI 3a</li> </ul> <p><i>Promoting business spirit, in particular facilitating the making of economic use of new ideas and encouraging the creation of new companies, also by using business incubators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI 3b</li> </ul> <p><i>The development and application of new business models for SMEs, in particular for their internationalisation</i></p>	<p><u>Axis 4 - OT5: Encouraging adaptation to climatic change and risk prevention and management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI 5b</li> </ul> <p><i>Encouraging investment so as to address specific risks, a guarantee of readiness for catastrophes, and the development of catastrophe management systems</i></p>
	<p><u>Axis 5 - OT6. Protecting the environment and promoting the efficient use of resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI 6c</li> </ul> <p><i>The protection, promotion and development of the cultural and natural heritage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI 6d</li> </ul> <p><i>Protecting and restoring biodiversity and the soil and promoting services related to the ecosystem, including the RED NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures.</i></p>

A brief justification is given below for the selection of each of the thematic objectives and their respective investment priorities:

**TO1** is an objective in which the SUDOE space is at a disadvantage regarding investment in R+D+I despite having achieved promising results in recent years. Innovation has been a key theme in the programme of the previous period of the SUDOE and has generated effective results and impact; new areas must continue to be supported and encouraged during the 2014-2020 period. This is achieved in particular as a result of the synergy and complementary aspects contributed by the Programme towards the achieving of the national priorities and goals established in the 2020 Europe strategy.

In effect the projects developed as part of this priority have generated networks of cooperation and excellence in R+D+I. These networks have allowed scientific, technological, and educational institutions of the region to achieve research results with a high added value on a transnational or European level. During the 2014-2020 period, by means of the investment priority selected it was proposed to take a closer look at this cooperation between players, consolidating and stabilising collaboration networks with the potential to produce (or already producing) results of excellence, strengthening mechanisms of the transfer of knowledge and technology, and concentrating investment on priority sectors of the SUDOE space, such as those related to the smart specialisation strategies of the various regions of the space.

The selection of **TO3** is justified because the encouraging of an economy concentrating on knowledge and innovation must of necessity be associated with the strengthening of the productive structure of the SUDOE space. In this field the transnational space is experiencing the challenge of increasing the resilience of its business fabric. The productive structure of the SUDOE space is essentially based on SMEs, which generate and absorb the highest percentage of employment and concentrate on the service sector and on traditional activities aimed at the home market, with limited innovation capacities and with difficulties in obtaining financing. The investment priorities selected aim to help improve the conditions of the context in which companies operate, strengthening institutions, services, and mechanisms supporting their development and internationalisation.

Owing to the intrinsic connection between the challenges and opportunities expounded in these two thematic objectives (encouraging companies to participate in R+D activities; the transfer of R+D results to the market; and innovation as a business competitiveness tool, among others), a coordinated approach during the 2014-2020 programme is justified.

The selection of **TO4**, for its part, is justified by the privileged position of the SUDOE space regarding the renewable energy sector together with its potential that is continuously being developed. Within the territory of the cooperation space high levels of the production and

consumption of renewable energy were found, which means that it is used on a greater scale in infrastructures and public buildings. This will consequently encourage and consolidate poles of excellence that will allow a model of economic development based on green, ecological, and energy growth and also on public spending on the protection of the environment (which is still relatively low in the regions of the SUDOE space).

The selection of **TO5** is justified by the territorial characteristics of the SUDOE space, the geography and natural heritage of which are facing either current or potential natural risks associated with the consequences of the effects of climatic change and with anthropic risks. These risks are associated with the scarcity of water resources and with their management in a space of great geographical diversity, and also with the great seasonal and spatial variability of precipitation according to the climatic zone, which generates periodically and by areas drought, fires, desertification, soil erosion, and cyclical floods.

Although they have been initiated at a regional and national level, the strategies of adaptation to climatic change and of the management of these risks give an appreciable added value in the form of improving the efficiency of methodological and technological solutions by means of cooperation between the agents involved. The idea is to generate agreed methods of facing up to risks efficiently and as a whole. Contributing to cooperation regarding these strategies and encouraging common methodologies and coordination activities therefore becomes a more efficient means than the sum of specific and individual actions.

The selection of **TO6** is largely justified by the existence of extensive forest areas, natural spaces, protected areas, etc. that need intervention if they are to guarantee their resilience regarding natural risks and those created by man (acting as a complement to OT5). Moreover, the SUDOE space has a marked rurality, a great biodiversity, and an extremely rich natural and cultural heritage that needs not only to be protected but also to be encouraged as to making use of it and contributing to local development in a sustainable manner.

The main themes included in Thematic Objectives (TOs) 4, 5, and 6 (Priority Axes 3, 4, and 5) and in the investment priorities selected are highly interrelated, owing to which they have been incorporated in the second major intervention area of the Programme, the environmental approach. It is essentially a case of protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the SUDOE space, emphasising its distinctive characteristics and its potential, and mitigating and managing the associated risks in such a way that they can contribute towards the transformation of the productive structure of the transnational space to more sustainable and efficient development patterns.



**1.1.2 Justification of the selection of the thematic objectives and the corresponding investment priorities, taking into consideration the association agreement, based on the analysis of the needs in the programme area as a whole and on the strategy adopted as a response to these needs, including if appropriate the links that are missing in the cross-border infrastructures, and taking into account ex ante assessment.**

**Table 1: Justification of the selection of the thematic objectives and the investment priorities**

Thematic objective selected	Investment priority selected	Justification of the selection
TO1 – Encouraging research, technological development, and innovation	Encouraging business investment in innovation and research, together with synergies between companies, R+D centres and higher education institutions, in particular in the development of products and services, the transferring of technology, corporate innovation, eco-innovation, the applications of public services, the stimulus of the demand, work on-line, clusters and free innovation through smart specialisation, and technological support and applied innovation, pilot projects, the quick validation of actions, improving advanced and first-production manufactures, in particular <i>Key Enabling Technologies</i> and the general dissemination of the technological objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Capitalising on the results obtained during the 2007-2013 period;</li> <li>✓ Closing the gap between the SUDOE area and the more innovative and technologically developed regions in Europe;</li> <li>✓ Encouraging the participation of private players in R+D+I;</li> <li>✓ Encouraging innovation as an added value and a basis for work on-line and for smart specialisation;</li> <li>✓ Promoting conditions for research of excellence.</li> </ul>
TO3 – Improving the competitiveness of SMEs	Promoting business spirit, in particular facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and promoting the creation of new companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Facilitating the creation of an environment favouring the exploitation, development, and consolidation of new business ideas;</li> <li>✓ Encouraging the creation of skills (the search for more efficient and effective solutions) for supporting SMEs;</li> <li>✓ Strengthening and articulating the services and institutions supporting the companies;</li> </ul>

Thematic objective selected	Investment priority selected	Justification of the selection
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Contributing towards strengthening sustainability and the strength (financial and non financial) of SMEs.</li> </ul>
<p>TO3 – Improving the competitiveness of the SMEs</p>	<p>Developing new business models for SMEs, in particular for their internationalisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Creating conditions for facilitating the internationalisation of SMEs;</li> <li>✓ Facilitating the development of new approaches, instruments, and strategies that facilitate SME access to foreign markets;</li> <li>✓ Encouraging business and institutional cooperation as an instrument supporting the internationalisation of SMEs.</li> </ul>
<p>TO4 – Favouring transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors</p>	<p>Encouraging energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in public infrastructures, including public buildings and the housing sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Buildings and houses are the first source of energy consumption;</li> <li>✓ Great growth potential in the renewable energy sector;</li> <li>✓ The arising of poles of excellence that will allow an economic development model based on green, ecological and energy growth;</li> <li>✓ The growing tendency to produce and consume renewable energy all over the Space;</li> <li>✓ Reduced public spending on environmental protection;</li> <li>✓ The intensification of natural risks as a consequence of global warming and climatic change.</li> </ul>
<p>TO5 – Encouraging adaptation to climatic change and risk prevention and management</p>	<p>Encouraging investment to address specific risks, a guarantee of resilience to catastrophes and the development of catastrophe management systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The geographic situation and fragile natural surroundings, with real risks associated with the effects of climatic change;</li> <li>✓ Intense natural risks associated with the scarcity of water resources and their management in a space of great geographical diversity; great seasonal and spatial variations in precipitation depending on the climatic area, which periodically generates by areas drought, fires, desertification, and floods;</li> <li>✓ Extensive forest areas, including those belonging to the <i>Red Natura 2000</i>, which need intervention to guarantee their resilience with regard to natural risks;</li> <li>✓ Constant expansion of arid areas and those with a high risk of desertification in the southern part of the SUDOE space, combined with periods of intense precipitation and extraordinary flows from the basins.</li> </ul>
<p>TO6 – Protecting the environment and encouraging the</p>	<p>The protection, promotion, and development of the cultural and natural heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ High environmental quality and diversity both geographical and climatic and ecological;</li> <li>✓ Great economic potential in the exploitation of natural resources;</li> </ul>

Thematic objective selected	Investment priority selected	Justification of the selection
efficient use of resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Competitive advantages for tourist development thanks to the environmental and ecological diversity and the quality of the cultural heritage.</li> </ul>
TO6 – Protecting the environment and promoting the efficient use of resources	Protecting and restoring the biodiversity and the soil and promoting services linked to the ecosystem, including the RED NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ High environmental quality and diversity both geographical and climatic and ecological;</li> <li>✓ Extensive territory within the <i>Red Natura 2000</i>;</li> <li>✓ Maximum investment in environmental protection by sectors specialising in biodiversity protection;</li> <li>✓ Reduced public spending on environmental protection.</li> </ul>

## 1.2 Justification of the financial allocation

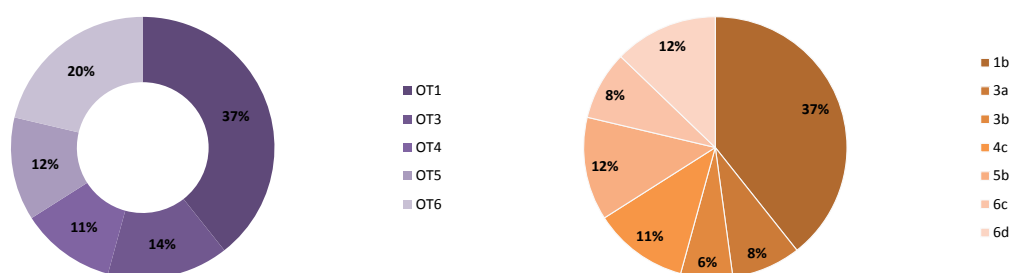
The financial allocation for the various priority axes, thematic objectives, and investment priorities has taken the following premises into consideration:

- ✓ The operating of the Programme and the financial allocation of the previous period (2007-2013), and from 2000 to 2006 in particular the reprogramming of funds that has essentially boosted investment in operations related to innovation; the experienced acquired by the programme has been capitalised on.
- ✓ The current socioeconomic and territorial context of the SUDOE space and its potential and risks associated with the protection and highlighting of the natural heritage and the mitigation of associated risks, with the consolidation of networks and results of research of excellence and with the vulnerability of SMEs and their effects on employability.
- ✓ The possibilities for action set out by the Association Agreements of each of the participating states, paying special attention to the shared focal points and which therefore were more in keeping with actions of common and transnational concern, with a greater knock-on factor as to the impact expected on the territory.

With the exception of the technical assistance axis (6%), the financial weighting between the six priority axes of the 2014-2020 SUDOE PO was established as follows:

- ✓ 37% for priority axis 1 – TO1
- ✓ 14% for priority axis 2 – TO3
- ✓ 11% for priority axis 3 – TO4
- ✓ 12% for priority axis 4 – TO5
- ✓ 20% for priority axis 5 – TO6
- ✓ 6% for the technical assistance axis

The figures below show the financial weighting of the 2014-2020 SUDOE PO budget among the various thematic objects and the different investment priorities:



The promotion of research, technological development, and innovation (TO1) and environmental protection and the efficiency of the resources (TO6) include 57% of the budget of the 2014-2020 SUDOE PO (37% and 20% respectively). These two major principles are followed by the promotion of competitiveness among SMEs (Axis 2), with 14% of the ERDF contribution, adaptation to climatic change, and risk management (Axis 4) with 12%, and finally the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors (Axis 3) with 11% of the total.

As for analysis by investment priorities, PI 1b is of vital importance (“Promoting business investment in innovation and research together with the synergies between companies, R+D centres, and higher education institutions”). It is the only investment priority selected in TO1 and has 37% of the total budget of the Programme. For the other investment priorities selected the budget is spread out more equally, with importance being given to the environmental priorities of the three thematic objectives associated with this intervention

vector (TO4, 5, and 6), those relating to risk prevention and management (PI 5b), the protection and restoration of biodiversity (PI 6d), and the promoting of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy (PI 4c), which together amount to 35% of the total budget of the 2014-2020 SUDOE PO. The remaining amount is distributed among the priority of the protection, promotion, and development of the cultural and natural heritage (6c) with 8%, the promotion of business spirit (also 8%), and the encouraging of new business models (6%).

This financial allocation clearly reflects the intention to concentrate resources for the challenges of deepening the economy of knowledge and innovation in the SUDOE space, consolidating cooperation networks and results of excellence in this field and strengthening investment in research into priority sectors for the cooperation space. This approach is characterised by a smart specialisation logic and increases the involvement of companies in R+D+I activities.

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**Table 2: Presentation of the investment strategy of the cooperation programme**

Priority axis	Aid from ERDF (EUR)	Percentage (%) of total aid from the Union to the cooperation programme (by Fund)			Thematic objective <sup>3</sup>	Investment priorities <sup>4</sup>	Specific objectives corresponding to investment priorities	Indicators of results corresponding to the specific objective
		ERDF	IEV (when appropriate) <sup>1</sup>	IAP (when appropriate) <sup>2</sup>				
1	39,519,894	37%			Promoting research, technological development, and innovation	Promoting business investment in innovation and research together with synergies between companies, R+D centres, and higher education institutions (...)	<p>Synergic and on-line operation of R+I at a transnational level as from smart specialisation</p> <p>Encouraging applied research and its dissemination related to essential facilitating technologies</p>	<p>Networks of collaboration between established companies and research institutions</p> <p>New technologies applied in the SUDOE space</p>

<sup>1</sup> European Neighbourhood Instrument (*Instrumento Europeo de Vecindad*, IEV)

<sup>2</sup> Preadherence Aid Instrument (*Instrumento de Ayuda de Preadhesión*, IAP)

<sup>3</sup> Title of the thematic object (not applicable to technical assistance)

<sup>4</sup> Title of the investment priority (not applicable to technical assistance)

Priority axis	Aid from ERDF (EUR)	Percentage (%) of total aid from the Union to the cooperation programme (by Fund)			Thematic objective <sup>3</sup>	Investment priorities <sup>4</sup>	Specific objectives corresponding to investment priorities	Indicators of results corresponding to the specific objective
		ERDF	IEV (when appropriate) <sup>1</sup>	IAP (when appropriate) <sup>2</sup>				
2	14,953,473	14%				Promoting business spirit, in particular facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and promoting the creation of new companies	Developing capacities to support SMEs of the SUDOE space	SMEs resorting to business development services created or supported by the SUDOE
					Improving the competitiveness of SMEs	Developing new business models for SMEs, in particular for their internationalisation	Favouring conditions for the internationalisation of SMEs	SMEs resorting to internationalisation services created or supported by the SUDOE

Priority axis	Aid from ERDF (EUR)	Percentage (%) of total aid from the Union to the cooperation programme (by Fund)			Thematic objective <sup>3</sup>	Investment priorities <sup>4</sup>	Specific objectives corresponding to investment priorities	Indicators of results corresponding to the specific objective
		ERDF	IEV (when appropriate) <sup>1</sup>	IAP (when appropriate) <sup>2</sup>				
3	11,749,158	11%			Favouring the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors	Encouraging energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in public infrastructures, including public buildings and the housing sector	Improving energy efficiency policies and the use of sources of renewable energies in public buildings and housing thanks to transnational cooperation	Energy efficiency strategies / initiatives encouraged in buildings
4	12,817,263	12%			Promoting adaptation to climatic change and risk prevention and management	Encouraging investment to guard against specific risks, a guarantee of resilience against catastrophes, and developing catastrophe management systems	Preparing plans for emergencies, for preventing and managing catastrophes, and for regenerating areas damaged by the same	Transnational strategies for the management of natural risks in the SUDOE space



Priority axis	Aid from ERDF (EUR)	Percentage (%) of total aid from the Union to the cooperation programme (by Fund)			Thematic objective <sup>3</sup>	Investment priorities <sup>4</sup>	Specific objectives corresponding to investment priorities	Indicators of results corresponding to the specific objective
		ERDF	IEV (when appropriate) <sup>1</sup>	IAP (when appropriate) <sup>2</sup>				
5	21,362,105	20%			Protecting the environment and promoting the efficient use of resources	Protecting, promoting, and developing the cultural and natural heritage	Improving the economic importance of the common natural and cultural heritage that can be highlighted with sustainable development logic	Improved management strategies/plans for the economic exploitation of natural resources
						Protecting and restoring biodiversity and the soil and promoting services linked to the ecosystem, including the RED NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures	Preserving and restoring the biodiversity of natural locations of the SUDOE with the aim of maintaining the ecological quality of the spaces, wellbeing, and the quality of life.	Improved management strategies/plans to participate in the protection of emblematic natural sites
6	6.408.631	6%			Technical assistance			

**SECTION 2**

**PRIORITY AXES**

**2.A. Descriptions of priority axes other than that of technical assistance**

2.A.1. PRIORITY AXIS 1: PROMOTING RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGICAL  
DEVELOPMENT, AND INNOVATION

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## 2.A.2 Justification of the establishing of a priority axis to cover more than one thematic objective

n.a.

## 2.A.3 Basis for calculating Union aid

This will be defined later on

## 2.A.4 Investment Priority 1b (PI 1b).

*Promoting business investment in innovation and research together with synergies between companies, R+D centres, and higher education institutions, in particular in the development of products and services, the transferring of technology, corporate innovation, eco-innovation, applications of public services, the stimulus of demand, work on-line, clusters, and free innovation by means of smart specialisation, and technical support and applied innovation, pilot projects, quick validation actions, improving advanced and initial production manufacturing, in particular Key Enabling Technologies and the general dissemination of the technological objectives*

## 2.A.5 Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and the results expected (PI 1b).

**Specific Objective 1: Synergic and on-line operation of R+I at a transnational level as from smart specialisation**

**Results that the member states aim to achieve with the aid of the Union**

This specific objective proposes the strengthening, creation, and maintenance of networks, partnerships, and other forms of cooperation aimed at R+D+I processes, together with going more deeply into the synergies between the players involved in these processes and the support of public policies to encourage innovation within the SUDOE space.

It is expected that this process will generate economies of scale and greater efficiency and effectiveness in the R+I activities carried out together with qualitative changes in the economic fabric of the SUDOE space. As a result of this, the idea is to promote research of excellence, innovation, added value in production, and smart specialisation within the SUDOE space.

It is also hoped that synergic and on-line operation will from an organisational point of view lead to the creation of new collaboration models, which will increase the degree of maturing of cooperation networks between R+D+I institutions within the SUDOE space, will strengthen their links with the local and regional productive system, and will promote the greater territorial impact of the actions financed with this objective in mind. Moreover, the intention is to increase the level of participation of R+D+I institutions and of SMEs in research and innovation initiatives recognised at a European level, as well as encouraging and contributing to research of excellence in the SUDOE space so as to produce results.

The active and efficient involvement of SMEs, which represent practically the entirety of the productive fabric of the SUDOE space, is a relevant element for the success of this specific objective. This involvement would improve the level of collaboration in R+D+I activities and would contribute to a greater level of private investment in R+D+I and improved levels of the transfer of technology to the market. As a result of this, it is important to highlight the positive consequences that may arise in sectors of intensive knowledge.

A greater selectivity of investment in R+D+I is also planned so as to make use of the endogenous resources and the competitive advantages of the SUDOE space. For this reason it is suggested that synergic and on-line operation should essentially affect sectors within the regional strategies of smart specialisation that are identified as being relevant to the SUDOE space. In order to do so the idea is to support the regions by strengthening the connection and cooperation between different strategies of smart specialisation that exist on a transnational level.

Finally, it is hoped that this synergic and on-line operation will allow a rapprochement between the various different regions of the SUDOE space reflected through the innovation indicators.

**Table 3: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 1b OE1)**

Identificati on	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value	Year of refer ence	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Collaboration networks between established companies and research institutions	No. of networks	21	2012	51	Progress report on the projects	Annual

**Specific objective 2: Encouraging applied research and its dissemination related to essential facilitating technologies**

**Results that the member states aim to achieve with the aid of the Union**

This objective proposes to go more deeply into the processes of transferring technology to the market, notably applied research related to Essential Facilitating Technologies (*Tecnologías Facilitadoras Esenciales*, TFEs): and in particular that orientated towards its use in the most relevant sectors of the SUDOE space.

Finally (and closely related to the previous specific objective) encouragement will be given to investments in R+D+I (concentrating on TFEs and their application to relevant sectors of the SUDOE space), which will contribute towards a more harmonious development among the regions of the SUDOE space. This involves bringing regions with a modest innovating profile closer to more innovative areas and strengthening the leading innovators and the knowledge and technology hubs.

**Table 4: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 1b OE2)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value	Year of reference	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	New technologies applied in the SUDOE space	No. of technologies	30	2012	80	Progress reports on the projects + formal agreements on the use/exploitation/marketing of technology	Annual

## 2.A.6 Actions to be financed within the framework of the investment priority (PI 1b).

### 2.A.6.1 Description of the type of actions to be financed with examples or their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including when appropriate the identification of the main target groups, the specific territories, the recipients, and the types of beneficiaries (PI 1b).

As a guideline the Programme has identified the following as priority sectors within the field of the actions to be carried out for 2014-2020, without detriment to the fact that the projects may also be working on other sectors: the aerospace and aeronautic industry; the automotive industry; water resources (their treatment, use, and supply), environmental services (risk management and protection and biodiversity protection and management) and energy services (production, distribution, and storage technologies as from renewable sources); biotechnology and health (including biomedicine and the pharmaceutical industry); agro-industry and the timber industry; creative industries (including cultural industries); textile, clothing, and footwear industries; industrial technologies (processes, equipment, machinery, and components); and information and telecommunications technologies (including electronics and computing); and tourism.

Under **specific objective 1 on synergic and on-line operation**, the following types of action are proposed:

- **The creation or consolidation of collaboration platforms**

This includes support for the creation, consolidation, or expansion of research consortiums, clusters, campuses of excellence, and poles of competitiveness. Among other initiatives, this category includes activities such as strategic and operational design, the identification and selection of members, the formalisation of platforms, the definition of results and impacts, the designing and implementation of research agendas, internationalisation plans, and strategies for seeking funds. As a guideline an approach is proposed concentrating on key sectors that have already been mentioned, which are the result of the diagnosis of the SUDOE space or smart specialisation strategies (whether regional or national).

- **Increasing participation in European Innovation Partnerships (EIP) and European Technological Platforms (ETP)**

Support will be given to companies and other players of the R+D+I system of the regions involved in the SUDOE space in activities encouraging their participation in European structures such as the EIP or ETP. Activities are included such as the setting in motion of the specific internationalisation agendas of these players, attendance at European events, participation in projects, etc..

- **Coordination between the regional smart specialisation strategies**

This category will assess actions of networking and benchmarking, together with the exchanging of good practices between the working groups and groups supporting the drawing up of the smart specialisation strategies of each region (NUT2 level) of the SUDOE space. It also includes the designing of joint action plans in order to address transnational challenges common to the regions involved.

- **Developing models for transferring technology, of innovation management, and of open innovation**

This category includes strategic and operational design, the implementation, consolidation, expansion, and/or internationalisation of structures such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP), the Société de l'Accélération de Transfer de Technologies (SATT), Company Accelerators, and Living Labs, among others. It also includes projects of the coordination, grouping, and strengthening of spin-offs and start-up firms and also the experimentation and exchanging of good practices in the use of crowdsourcing models in innovation processes.

**Results expected:** With the action categories proposed the goal is the achieving of greater coordination between the R+D+I players (*on-line operation*), based on the setting up of more



flexible and competitive cooperation models (*synergic operation*) and concentrating on the selection of research agendas and the corresponding financial effort (*smart specialisation*).

**Beneficiaries:** Potential beneficiaries include the main players of the scientific and technological system: universities, research centres, technological centres, scientific and technological parks, clusters, and other business associations. It also includes companies, with special emphasis given to SMEs, and governmental and regional institutions related to R+D+I, in particular smart specialisation strategies.

**Geographical range:** The action categories proposed cover the whole of the SUDOE space without any particular region being specified.

**Under specific objective 2 on the encouraging of applied research and its dissemination relating to essential facilitating technologies,** the following action categories are proposed:

- **Consolidation of value chains in the field of TFEs**

This action category proposes the strengthening of value chains in different productive fields by means of the application of TFEs. The whole of the chain will be affected, ranging from research, the development of products or processes, and demonstration to competitive manufacturing. In order to do so different players from different regions of the SUDOE space will be involved; they will be supported in the internationalisation of their activities, bilateral contacts (*matchmaking*) between local R+D+I players, the identification of synergies and/or complementary aspects between them, and the exploitation of spill-over.

- **Carrying out of pilot actions and multi-TFE demonstration projects at a transnational level**

This category aims to contribute to technological validation and operating demonstrations in **relevant fields of the technologies developed together with the exploitation of results** of research in these fields. The carrying out of pilot actions, demonstration projects, or the construction of prototypes are examples of initiatives to be supported. It is important to point out that “cross fertilisation” initiatives involving different TFEs and their applications will be assessed.

- **Dissemination of TFE technologies at a company level and other R+D+I infrastructures**

This field will support dissemination and awareness activities, seminars on TFEs and their applications and benefits; transnational projects for transferring good practices for exchanging experiences and the deployment of cooperation in the field of research and the application of TFEs; and bilateral transnational or international programmes so as to encourage the marketing of TFEs and their introduction onto the market.

- **Application of innovation in order to improve environmental protection**

This category includes applied research activities, the carrying out of pilot activities, and experimenting with new products, services, and solutions with the aim of strengthening environmental protection in the SUDOE space. The initiatives set in motion as part of this category will include fields such as water resources (technologies for efficient management, developing the potential for saving, smart distribution systems, quality monitoring, irrigation or supply systems, etc.), solid urban waste (technologies for controlling pollution, exploitation for energy purposes, etc.) and soils (systems for monitoring and controlling nutrients, risk prediction, etc.).

**Results expected:** This specific objective will operate as a complement to that of *Horizonte 2020*, promoting a sectoral and territorial approach (related to TFEs and their application to relevant sectors for the SUDOE space) and affecting the advanced nodes of technological development (such as the demonstration of products or competitive manufacturing – action categories 2 and 4). Likewise, it is noteworthy for the development of networks and collaboration structures between R+D+I players around TFEs (action categories 1 and 3), which can subsequently seek financing under the calls of *Horizonte 2020*.

**Beneficiaries:** These categories are aimed at all transnational R+D+I players and are particularly applicable to those with greater potential for contributing to the integration of value chains and to the generating of complementary aspects and synergies at a transnational level: companies, especially SMEs, together with clusters, networks, or research consortiums.

**Geographical range:** The action categories proposed cover the whole of the SUDOE space without any particular region being specified.

## 2.A.6.2 Guiding principles for selecting operations (PI 1b).

In the case of investment priority 1b, the guidelines proposed for the selection of operations relate to that expounded in each specific objective and include:

1. **Various types of region involved:** Priority will be given to projects carried out by partnerships and consortiums making up a set of different players belonging to regions with a different level of technological development (reflected through its indicators).
2. **Selectivity of the investment:** Operations concentrating on previously identified sectors of activity that are relevant to the SUDOE space will be considered to have priority.

**3. Added value at a regional, transnational, and European level:** The operations must demonstrate the impact of the activities and their results must be obtained within the regions involved. Moreover, the progress achieved must contribute to the scope of the goals of the 2020 Europe strategy and to the challenges and objectives of the emblematic initiative that is the Union of Innovation.

#### 2.A.6.5 Productivity indicators (by investment priority) (PI 1b).

**Table 5: Common productivity indicators specific to the programme (PI 1b)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Companies collaborating with research institutions on research projects financed by SUDOE	No. of companies	300	Progress reports on the projects	Annual
	Research centres taking part in transnational research projects	No. of research centres	300	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

2.A.1. PRIORITY AXIS 2: IMPROVING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF SMEs

DRAFT

## 2.A.2 Justification of the establishing of a priority axis to cover more than one thematic objective

n.a.

## 2.A.3 Basis for calculating Union aid

This will be defined later on

## 2.A.4 Investment Priority 3a (PI 3a).

*Encouraging business spirit and in particular facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and promoting the creation of new companies*

## 2.A.5 Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and the results expected (PI 3a).

**Specific Objective 1: Developing capacities so as to support the companies of the SUDOE space**

**Results that the member states aim to achieve with the help of the Union**

SMEs represent the vast majority of the business fabric of the SUDOE space and are also one of the most important sources of employment. However, they are also more vulnerable to the effects of the economic crisis that is affecting most of the regions of the SUDOE space. In general companies of this size are facing different challenges that make it more difficult for them to be competitive in a context of reduced investment and consumption, such as that deriving from limited access to credit, a low innovation capacity, and difficulties in seeking foreign markets, among others.

This specific objective proposes to promote the creation of capacities and the search for more efficient and more effective transnational solutions in order to support SMEs for their specific needs, designing actions to help to strengthen sustainability (both financial and non financial) within the SUDOE space.

This developing of capacities essentially involves working with the institutions and services that support business development. This means firstly facilitating the creation of a favourable atmosphere for the exploitation, development, and consolidation of new business ideas. In this context what is proposed is the strengthening and articulating of services and institutions for supporting SMEs so that they can give more efficient, coordinated, close, and innovative responses to the situation and the challenges faced by the SMEs of the SUDOE space. In order to do so, the first two action types proposed in this specific objective are included, i.e. the perfecting of support institutions and the developing of new and innovative services to support business development.

In the same way, this development of capacities also implies creating conditions that help to promote business development in its strict sense by means of the exploitation of business ideas in strategic sectors that are relevant to the economy of the SUDOE space and that contribute towards greater integration in value chains at a transnational level. In order to achieve this challenge, the third action type of this specific objective is proposed.

Finally, this development of capacities also implies concentrating on the resolving of specific problems that SMEs must face in their process of business development, such as the search for and access to financing. In this field the transnational dimension allows the development of joint initiatives and the addressing of these aspects in a coordinated manner, together with the dissemination of information and the rapprochement of SMEs and investors. These activities are part of the fourth action category proposed for this specific objective.

**Table 6: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 3a)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value	Year of reference	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	SMEs that resort to business development services created or supported by the SUDOE	No. of companies	1474	2012	2948	Progress reports for the projects	Annual

## 2.A.6 Actions to be financed within the framework of the investment priority (PI 3a).

2.A.6.1 Description of the type of actions to be financed with examples or their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including when appropriate the identification of the main target groups, the specific territories, the recipients, and the types of beneficiaries (PI 3a).

- **Strengthening business support institutions**

The objective of this type is to promote excellence in the action and management of the business support institutions of the SUDOE space, such as business incubators, business accelerators, technological parks, traders' associations, industrial associations, offices supporting entrepreneurs, etc., giving them a greater response capacity to the demands and needs of SMEs.

In this field it will be possible to encourage support for initiatives to improve operation and internal processes, such as the certification of business support institutions, staff qualification initiatives, live-in and training programmes for managers of these institutions, or benchmarking initiatives together with the incorporating of experiences supporting the institutional strength of these organisations.

- **The development of new and innovating services to support business development**

This type of action concentrates on the services provided by the support institutions for business development (and not on the institutions as such, which will be directly benefited by type 1).

It aims to encourage innovation applied to the services supporting business development, creating new services or perfecting/consolidating services that already exist in such a way that the support for SMEs is more effective and more efficient.

In this field initiatives are suggested such as the development of technological surveillance services (the identification and dissemination of information and opportunities related to R+D+I, technological development and ICTs, etc.), the creation of regional networks to support enterprise under a logic of proximity services, the development of business accelerators, or the exchanging of good business support practices on a transnational level.

- **Promoting enterprise in key sectors**

This type aims to give more direct support to the launching of new business ideas in relevant sectors for the SUDOE space, including services and technical specialised support for newly created companies in these sectors.

As a guideline, the sectors contemplated under this type include the most relevant in the SUDOE space, in particular those identified within the logic of smart specialisation and the promotion of TFEs which were previously mentioned in priority access 1.

Within the field of this action category initiatives are proposed such as advice for start-up firms and spin-offs, the drawing up and implementing of common plans (business, investment, marketing), strategic planning, and coaching and mentoring.

- **Support for finance information activities**

This type encourages the carrying out of actions to make it easier for SMEs to become familiar with and to access the financial instruments available, both within the framework of the European Union (such as the COSME programmes and the *Instrumento Pymes* (SMEs Instrument) of *Horizonte 2020*) and also in the same way in each of the countries and regions that are members of the SUDOE space.

**Results expected:** The implementation of this specific objective will help on the one hand to make it easier for SMEs to access existing services to support business development in the SUDOE space, and on the other hand to perfect these same services (i.e. to improve their capacity to attend demands from SMEs in an effective and efficient manner).

Likewise, this specific objective can help to improve the resilience capacity of SMEs and therefore to strengthen their response strategies and mechanisms with a view to future economic crises.

**Beneficiaries:** in particular public and private institutions supporting the creation and expansion of companies, such as business incubators and accelerators, business parks, technological parks, etc.; banks and other public or private institutions with the capacity to provide finance; and sectoral representation structures such as industrial associations and business associations.

**Geographical range:** The action types cover the whole of the SUDOE space without any particular region being specified.



## 2.A.6.2 Guiding principles for selecting operations (PI 3a).

**Geographical range:** This investment priority does not contemplate specific territorial approaches aimed at regions in the SUDOE space.

- **Sectoral priority:** Priority will be given to projects related to relevant sectors within the SUDOE space and those intensive in knowledge and technological application, and/or those considered a priority in the field of the smart specialisation strategies of the regions involved.
- **Impact on the territory:** Priority will be given to projects favouring the making use of the endogenous resources of the territories involved.

## 2.A.6.5 Productivity indicators (by priority of investment) (PI 3a)

**Table 7: Common productivity indicators that are specific to the programme (PI 3a)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Business development systems created or supported by the SUDOE	No. of services	33	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

## 2.A.4 Investment priority 3b (PI 3b)

***Developing new business models for SMEs, in particular for their internationalisation***

## 2.A.5 Specific objects corresponding to the investment priority and results expected (PI 3b).

### **Specific Objective 1: Favouring conditions for the internationalisation of SMEs**

#### **Results that the member states aim to achieve with the aid of the Union**

In general the SMEs of the SUDOE space concentrate their strategic priorities on their respective home markets (regional or national). However, despite their special vulnerability, the current context of the economic crisis means that a necessary strategy in order to survive is that of expanding to foreign markets.

In order to do so SMEs encounter various difficulties in accessing these new international markets owing to their own limitations, which include in particular those of a financial nature or pertaining to human resources or from a lack of knowledge of the markets or of the support instruments available. These limitations are aggravated by the crisis situation and by the complexity of the procedures associated with internationalisation.

This specific objective does not contemplate direct support for the internationalisation of companies but rather the creation of conditions that contribute to the achieving of this goal by means of the development of new approaches, instruments, and strategies that facilitate access to foreign markets for SMEs.

The action types proposed take these challenges into account and intervene in various phases of the internationalisation process.

By action types the first stresses the creation and consolidation of networks and support services for internationalisation, notably encouraging cooperation between SMEs.

The second type stresses support services related to international promotion, in particular the development and internationalisation of business cooperation models.

The approach of this specific objective is that of relevant sectors within the SUDOE space related to TFEs and priority sectors identified by means of smart specialisation strategies and with a high growth potential in their internationalisation process.

**Table 8: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 3b)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value	Year of reference	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	SMEs that resort to internationalisation services created or supported by the SUDOE	No. of companies	93	2012	243	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

2.A.6 Actions to be financed within the framework of the investment priority (PI 3b).

2.A.6.1 Description of the type of actions to be financed with examples or their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including when appropriate the identification of the main target groups, the specific territories, the recipients, and the types of beneficiaries (PI 3b).

- **Creation and consolidation of internationalisation support services and networks**

The operations to be financed must encourage/facilitate the international promotion of the SMEs of the SUDOE as an essential premise for generating business and for a consolidated and sustainable international presence. This is expected to have a special impact on cooperation between SMEs as a support mechanism.

This type includes actions such as the development/consolidation/expansion of associations of companies, joint international marketing operations, the dissemination of market information, and marketplace and market intelligence initiatives, among others.

- **Support for the development and internationalisation of business cooperation models**

The approach of this type is the promotion of the development and internationalisation of cooperation models between companies with the objective of encouraging more efficient support for international markets, generating new business opportunities for companies and strengthening their value chains in relevant sectors at a transnational level.

The operations to be financed may affect various phases of the evolution of initiatives of cooperation between companies, from their incorporation to their internationalisation and including for instance their consolidation, expansion, and certification.

Among other initiatives that can be grouped in this field the following stand out: the creation/consolidation/expansion of thematic networks or of networks of excellence, the involvement of companies of the SUDOE space in these networks, brokerage and networking initiatives, and capacity building.

**Results expected:** The implementation of this specific objective will contribute on the one hand to make the support and consolidation of the SMEs of the SUDOE space on international markets more efficient (i.e. so as to produce relevant results that last over time) and on the other to generate more suitable models (based on cooperation between companies with the support of institutions and services that are better prepared for this challenge).

**Beneficiaries:** Institutions supporting internationalisation such as chambers of commerce, international business centres, business and commercial associations, public institutions, incubators of exporting companies, and clusters, among others.

**Geographical range:** The action types proposed cover the whole of the SUDOE space without any particular region being specified.

#### 2.A.6.2 Guiding principles for selecting operations (PI 3b).

For investment priority 3b the guidelines for the selection of operations include:

1. **Market diversification:** operations that propose to work on new markets for the companies involved will be given priority, together with those designed to consolidate markets by means of initiatives considering this phase in the internationalisation process.
2. **Strategic sectors:** priority will be given to operations relating to sectors identified as relevant within the SUDOE space and related to TFEs or sectors identified as having priority under the smart specialisation strategies of the regions of the SUDOE space, without detriment to the possibility of approving operations in other sectors.
3. **Exporting knowledge-intensive goods or services:** priority will be given to operations related to the exporting of knowledge-intensive goods or services with a high potential for technological development and innovation, and which may give added value to the trading and export volume of the companies involved.

#### 2.A.6.5 Productivity indicators (by investment priorities) (PI 3b).

**Table 9: Common productivity indicators that are specific to the programme (PI 3b)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Reprt frequency
	Internationalisation services created or supported by the SUDOE	No. of services	22	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

2.A.1 PRIORITY AXIS 3: FAVOURING THE TRANSITION TO A LOW-CARBON  
ECONOMY IN ALL SECTORS

DRAFT

## 2.A.2 Justification of the establishing of a priority axis to cover more than one thematic objective

n.a.

## 2.A.3 Basis for calculating Union aid

This will be defined later on

## 2.A.4 Investment Priority 4c (PI 4c).

*Encouraging energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in public infrastructures, including public buildings and the housing sector*

## 2.A.5 Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and the results expected (PI 4c)

**Specific Objective 1: Improving energy efficiency policies and the use of renewable energy sources in public buildings and housing thanks to transnational cooperation.**

**Results that the member states aim to achieve with the aid of the Union**

The strategy of the SUDOE programme on energy transition consists of helping by means of transnational cooperation to improve national and regional devices that tend to reduce the energy bill and that fight against greenhouse gas emissions, making use of the green economy potential. This specific objective concentrates on improving energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies in public buildings and in housing.

Energy efficiency, especially in construction, is the first axis of action in the process of change towards a low-carbon economy. The construction sector represents almost half of the energy consumed and is equally the origin of almost a third of greenhouse gas emissions. A considerable amount of energy is saved by the restoration of buildings and homes that need improvement thanks to the capacities of managers of housing pools or from the administrations and to better observations and knowledge on consumption by means of a the evolution of energy behaviour and use.

The second action axis concentrates on the use of local renewable energy in public buildings and in housing pools whenever this is possible. The diagnosis indicates that the territory is in a good position to use renewable energy (wind, solar, or biomass energy), which despite the very variable level of development between countries, regions, or from one source of energy or another could help to meet the increased demand for energy. It is therefore necessary to raise the awareness of players with different levels of responsibility of the need to make use of renewable energy sources, and also to assess the viability of energy distribution strategies to include local sources of renewable energy.

The results expected from transnational cooperation on energy efficiency and renewable energy must allow the contributing of novel solutions to increase the use of renewable energy, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to achieve the highly efficient energy consumption of public buildings and housing. These solutions could be requested and financed through regional programmes, owing to which one of the expected results of this investment priority will be the strengthening of the strategies drawn up for the ERDF regional programmes. Moreover, the programme will target public players who are major planners in the housing sector. In this sense its operations will serve as an example of good practices and can catalyse ways of setting these measures in motion in the private sector.



**Table 10: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 4c)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value	Year of reference	Objective value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Number of energy efficiency strategies / initiatives encouraged in buildings	No.	9	2013	12	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

## 2.A.6 Actions to be financed within the framework of the investment priority (PI 4c).

### 2.A.6.1 Description of the type of actions to be financed with examples or their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including when appropriate the identification of the main target groups, the specific territories, the recipients, and the types of beneficiaries (PI 4c).

The action categories contemplated in this objective are in keeping with the expected results for this investment priority; there are 6 main types:

- **Stimulating the transferring of innovation and its assessment and application**

It is a case of encouraging cooperation between the key players in the sector (innovation centres and specialised clusters, public managers, and companies) and in the transferring of technologies and their application, together with the assessment of research and innovation in the field of energy efficiency. In order to do so, whenever possible the use of renewable energy in public buildings and the housing sector will be promoted.

The diagnosis identifies the need to stimulate technology and the transfer of knowledge concerning low-carbon emissions in sectors with a high energy consumption and in particular in sustainable construction. Likewise it reminds us of the need to create a critical mass for setting in motion low-carbon technologies so as to contribute to the EU 2020 sustainable growth objectives.

The importance of innovation must be stressed as a priority to public bodies and those administering housing pools (offices for managing the latter, for example) and also to companies from various professional sectors (construction, town planning, architecture, energy...). These groups are at the extreme end of the innovation cycle and in many cases represent operations that are highly experimental.

The programme will promote actions on a transnational scale of application and which place on the market solutions arising from R+D+I in collaboration on energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy, eco-construction, and any other sector devoted to improving the efficiency of energy consumption in construction and its ecological footprint. In order to do so the participation of SMEs will be stimulated and networks and initiatives will be set up to promote the grouping of companies. By way of an example the research, studies, and collaborations designed to set innovation in motion within the framework of energy efficiency in construction are noteworthy as they favour the development of territorial energy action adapted to specific areas and with a high transferability. The actions will be designed to set up new energy solutions with an integrated approach, including the stimulation of capitalisation and cooperation between the *Horizonte 2020*, Cooperation, and ERDF regional programmes eligible in the SUDOE area. Training and qualification will also be promoted, particularly that of professionals (creative workers, architecture, town planners, fitters, students) of the energy sector and of that of construction, restoration, and maintenance.

- **Promoting the modification of the behaviour of decision-makers, economic players, and the general public**

It is proposed to develop information actions aimed at reducing and making more efficient energy consumption in public buildings involving a large number of different players (national authorities, associations, promoters, companies, inhabitants). In this field SUDOE scale cooperation can give a real added value with the pooling of resources and knowledge to be disseminated.

The programme will promote action in common with the aim of involving in particular the following agents:

- National authorities responsible for drawing up common regulations and/or investment or energy restoration programmes for public buildings so as to increase their energy efficiency;
- Administrations and public bodies that promote housing construction and which have the capacity to give the specifications a more ecological touch and reduce their energy bill for construction and restoration modes;
- Promoters and companies taking part in the construction, restoration, and insulation of buildings, the experience and qualifications of which provide high added value in order to improve the efficiency of the possible investment.

The behaviour of the tenants of the buildings and their maintenance, moreover, adds important aspects to the field of the reduction of energy consumption and means that awareness campaigns must be carried out. In some cases the efficiency of the investments made (in technology, systems, materials, surveys) is less than that anticipated as many of them are not adapted to the customs of the population. This field of action (energy efficiency) tends to be little studied; it is possible to carry out actions to rationalise the making of investments and to strengthen their impact. Transnational cooperation must take this bid more into account and support the advent of innovative and practical solutions and ways of making them applicable to the whole of the SUDOE territory; they can modify behaviour with a view to the most efficient energy consumption.

- **Tools of observation and analysis**

It is necessary to promote the observation and analysis of the impact of the solutions, strategies, and behaviour that aim to favour the capitalisation of these experiences within the SUDOE space and to improve the harmonisation of the interventions. In particular, the task of raising the awareness of the population or of the decision-makers will require tools of observation capable of separating the expenses of the different sources of consumption (heating, hot water). These elements will serve as an incentive to better adapt the technologies applied to the needs of the inhabitants. In order to do so projects such as transnational observatories favour the comparison of consumers, their behaviour, management methods, the technologies used, the energy saved, etc., and they will be supported through the PO.

- **Accompaniment for energy saving projects in infrastructures, public administrations, and housing**

The programme aims to support collaborations between public players and local and national authorities with the objective of encouraging the energy efficiency of the public services provided at all levels of the administration, including public buildings (quality renovation and construction and Low Consumption Bulbs (*Bombillas de Bajo Consumo*, BBC) examples; street lighting, the improvement of heating and ventilation systems, consumption follow-up, studies, and diagnosis) as well as the improving of the efficiency of computer systems and their regulations. The joint operations will be aimed at estimating the use of local resources from the SUDOE space to favour the consumption of biomaterials and products deriving from recycling for the construction / restoration of insulation.

The programme will promote actions of accompaniment both concerning strategic planning and management and the setting up of accompaniment operations for lessors and tenants (in terms of uses, the modification of behaviour...). In particular the programme will be able to support initiatives for improving energy efficiency established within the framework of integrated urban projects.

In this field the thematic concentration of the Cohesion policy developed by the European Union establishes that the regions of the SUDOE space as a whole must develop investment programmes, in particular in urban areas. In order to do so cooperation must allow the improving of the efficiency of regional strategies and of the investments programmed in other settings and in particular by means of the regional ERDF programmes through the exchanging of knowledge, the capitalisation of experiences, common experimentation, and the carrying out of pilot tests with a demonstrational effect. Moreover, the solutions developed and shared in the cooperation framework must be set in motion within the framework of the regional ERDF programmes, especially by means of integrated urban strategies supported by these programmes.

By way of example the following proposals stand out:

- The carrying out of pilot renovation actions that allow the demonstration of the viability of the application of innovations in the field of energy efficiency in buildings and also in structuring (strategic) projects such as those of transnational observatories. This type of action must include specific criteria such as a limited number of operations (depending on the technical specifications), a minimum number of regions involved, and the presence of key players. The projects developed must have a strong demonstrational capacity and a significant interest at a transnational level in such a way that the results can be transferred to other areas of the SUDOE space and to other cooperation spaces demonstrating the strong added value that is provided by cooperation. The investments or tasks must be promoted within the framework of pilot actions.
- Actions that aim to improve knowledge of the needs of renovation/ adaptation, management training, and also the starting up of operations and planning. In certain aspects the projects may develop (by means of exchanges) actions of identification and capitalisation, practices, and studies, the interest of which is not merely local. These activities will be used to support the definition of the setting up of global strategies for the reduction of energy consumption, thus allowing the incorporation of these interventions within a framework of coordination with the aim of drawing up strategic documents and action plans.
- Common actions for strengthening capacities and pooling and creating networks of skills, together with transnational platforms of strategic support aimed at research into operating solutions that is facilitated thanks to the development of networks of professionals from the sector (managers, engineers,...). These activities will be carried out with the aim of accompanying the public

authorities in their projects and actions of the management of restoration and energy optimisation.

- The creation of joint/shared tools for the observation of energy consumption, the assessment of the energy gained from restoration operations, the mobilisation of the population, or actions allowing the reduction of energy expenses, for example by using ICTs.

- **Actions in favour of the improved use of renewable energy sources in buildings and housing**

The programme will support initiatives including or increasing the use of renewable energy sources in buildings. Cooperation must allow the drawing up of sustainable management plans or of practical solutions for the constant availability of local renewable energy sources. Moreover, it will promote experimentation on the viability of energy distribution strategies integrating local renewable energy sources, especially by means of the transfer, dissemination, and capitalisation of results.

**Results expected:** Improving the efficiency of renovation and thermal restoration plans and of the use of renewable energy in public buildings and housing, which in turn lead to greater efficiency in energy consumption.

**Beneficiaries:**

- Public bodies: national, regional, or local authorities and their groupings including the transnational scale; public establishments and bodies managing pools of social housing (HLM offices for example), energy and environmental services; environmental agencies; universities, research institutions, and technological centres.
- Economic operators and companies: specialists from various professional sectors (construction, town planning, architecture, energy, ...), consular chambers, professional associations, and certification and control bodies.
- Clusters and poles of competitiveness specialising in energy and ICTs applied to building, eco-construction, ecological engineering, etc.

**Geographical range:** No specific territorial approach for the application of these types is proposed. A strong participation of players from metropolitan areas and those of urban renovation is recommended.

### 2.A.6.2 Guiding principles for selecting operations (PI 4c).

For investment priority 4c the guidelines proposed for the selection of operations are in line with that proposed in each specific objective and include:

1. The innovations, research, and technologies set in motion at a local level must be in keeping with national innovation strategies and smart specialisation strategies.
2. Priority will be given to any action designed to promote energy efficiency in public infrastructures and in housing, in particular qualitative aspects of innovative solutions for owners and managers of public buildings. Likewise, those contained in the framework of integrated urban projects including those relating to the urban axis of the regional ERDF POs will also be given priority, with the aim of improving their efficiency, creating synergies, and facilitating the capitalisation of results between programmes.
3. The participation of companies (SMEs) will be promoted together with that of their groupings and public or private managers of social housing pools, or those located in quarters given priority by national policies of social cohesion.

### 2.A.6.5 Productivity indicators (by investment priority) (PI 4c).

**Table 11: Common productivity indicators specific to the programme (PI 4c)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Number of tools, services, and energy models developed for improving the energy efficiency strategies of buildings	No.	85	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

2.A.1. PRIORITY AXIS 4: PROMOTING ADAPTATION TO CLIMATIC CHANGE AND  
RISK PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT

DRAFT

## 2.A.2 Justification of the establishing of a priority axis to cover more than one thematic objective

n.a.

## 2.A.3 Basis for calculating Union aid

This will be defined later on.

## 2.A.4 Investment Priority 5b (PI 5b).

***Encouraging investment to address specific risks, a guarantee of preparation against catastrophes, and the development of catastrophe management systems***

## 2.A.5 Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and the results expected (PI 5b).

**Specific Objective 1: The preparation of prevention, emergency, and management plans for catastrophes and the regeneration of areas damaged by them**

**Results that the member states aim to achieve with the aid of the Union**

This specific objective concentrates on supporting operations on risk prevention and emergency action in the event of catastrophes that must be implemented by the territorial players, both in the stages of risk adaptation, prevention, and management and in the mitigating of the effects of the natural risks.

A second group of actions consist of establishing common plans and programmes for the SUDOE space with regard to the most frequent risk in the whole of the territory or at least in common areas, joint management areas, etc.. The impact of natural risks tends to have consequence that go beyond geographical-administrative limits, as is the case with periods of drought, heavy rain, or floods over wide areas caused by general climatic factors, technological risks, etc..



Together with natural risks, technological risks represent a growing risk factor. For this variable the objective consists of supporting the development of management tools for technological risks and their detection and reduction, specifically of those more frequently detected in the eligible territory at present and according to future predictions with the result of minimising or eliminating the negative effects of these risks.

The carrying out of the actions described in a cooperation setting allows the development of joint work protocols, the transferring of good practices, and the establishing of joint problem solving. Attention will also be paid to the development of joint action plans in the event of natural catastrophes with an impact on a significant part of the SUDOE territory that require intervention with transnational coordination, such as emergency plans.

Civil defence systems must be prepared for future challenges but they must also be present in relation to natural disasters that go beyond the knowledge and techniques used up to now. For this reason, the thematic objective stresses the preparation of new tools and the more precise and evolved development of existing ones so as to give a more precise and faster response capacity. Correct prediction is an essential factor in civil defence action if we are to avoid damage and losses, both human and economic; furthermore the establishing of cooperative actions gives an important added value to the development of this subject.

The idea is also to invigorate the business sector, in particular that of SMEs, by the generating of new opportunities deriving from the need for new management of ecosystems, water management, the application of new innovative material, management of the supply chains affected by natural risks, etc..

**Table 12: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 5b)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value <sup>a</sup>	Year of reference	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Transnational strategies of natural risk management in the SUDOE space	No. of strategies	6	2013	8 (2 strategies per identified risk)	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

## 2.A.6 Actions to be financed within the framework of investment priority (PI 5b).

### 2.A.6.1 Description of the type of actions to be financed with examples or their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including when appropriate the identification of the main target groups, the specific territories, the recipients, and the types of beneficiaries (PI 5b).

This section details the type of actions that can be carried out within the following investment priority: “Encouraging investment for addressing specific risks, a guarantee of resilience against catastrophes, and the development of catastrophe management systems”:

#### 1. **Emergency plans**

Actions that aim to strengthen and disseminate the results of the emergency plans are of great importance so as to be able to react to the effects of natural risks both quickly and efficiently. The approach of emergency plans has a sense of its own and they are very useful in the case of risks that are shared between the States of the Programme, as the approach to these problems goes beyond geographical borders.

As specific examples of these actions, intervention techniques and methodologies are proposed that are commonly applicable by environmental sectors, by sectors of activity, or by territory type. For their part, plans linked to each specific risk or at least the most outstanding (drought, floods, pollution) are the most notable examples.

#### 2. **Early warning systems**

Early warning systems allow progress in the implementation of safety devices against the threat of natural disasters such as floods, periods of drought or continuous rain, periods of intense heat, or on the contrary periods of intense cold.

Prediction systems are extremely useful for this purpose and are the first of the examples of possible action to be carried out. Warning systems for flooding and strong winds or storms; those measuring the degradation of soil layers; and those measuring the pollution of groundwater and surface water and their amount and availability are crucial in order to maintain the quality of life of the population.

Actions will be included to stress techniques and methodologies to train and notify the population by testing models that have been used successfully in SUDOE territories. In this way it is possible to improve the capacity of the population to react to actual risks, both natural and technological; and the production of systems for the harmonisation of signalectics and regulations.

Other examples of warning systems are those of the analysis of meteorological behaviour and phenomena that allow major climatic threats to be anticipated earlier and earlier, which means that the effects of these catastrophes can be prevented or at least reduced.

### 3. Development of risk management tools

Risk management tools include a series of varied elements that allow the obtaining of efficient forecast and prevention systems when associated. Risk is a element that can be quantified and therefore needs forecasting and monitoring in order to propose suitable solutions adapted to each case, both in the field of natural risks and in that of technological risks.

By way of examples the following actions can be mentioned: mapping of the most vulnerable areas so as to know them better; geographical information systems in those cases in which sufficient information is available; the conceptualisation and design of joint work and intervention methodologies and models; the determination and prediction of dangers; risk detection in hydrographical matters; the assessment of health, environmental, economic, and social impact; the analysis of risks relating to the carrying out of human activities; transnational actions for the prevention, alert, and management of the risks associated with transport and logistical systems; ...

Moreover, it is proposed to stress actions for informing the population and raising their awareness and for the management of natural catastrophes and technological risks, with the aim of being able to act from the outset and improve the coordination of measures of civil defence, etc. with the civil population.

### 4. Tools for supporting transferrable systems of observation, measurement, and prevention

It is proposed to develop support systems such as the development of solid and precise cartographical bases or of more advanced systems such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Although these elements are not strictly prevention tools, they **are** baselines for the development of emergency plans and action on the ground.

Optimisation tools and tools for pooling the techniques and methodologies of the emergency plans together with early warning devices must have detailed knowledge of the terrain and in general as much information as possible so as to be able to act promptly and efficiently. A good example is that of forest fires in which knowledge of the terrain is essential when establishing the intervention strategy. Likewise, knowledge of the current and former courses of rivers, especially in mountain areas, is essential in the prevention of possible floods owing to sporadic rises of the water level and the avoiding of settlements in very dangerous areas.

The SUDOE territory contains notable examples of possible intervention concerning fires, floods, or strong winds that can be analysed and parameterised so as to attempt to obtain the necessary intervention adjustments contributing to the efficiency of prevention plans and strategies.

#### 5. Tools and methodologies for the regeneration of soil damaged by natural disasters

In the SUDOE space soils suffer considerably as a consequence of natural disasters and the most obvious risks. They lose their most fertile layers due to floods or erosion and also as a result of poor soil management deriving from subsequent intervention in the face of these natural disasters. The programme will promote joint actions to allow the improved treatment of soils affected by natural catastrophes and disasters, in particular as a result of erosion, floods, and forest fires, that are appropriate in a transnational setting.

**Results expected:** With the type of actions described the aim is to achieve improved coordination in prevention plans and the management of catastrophes and early detection tools so as to allow a more integrated and homogeneous response to catastrophes in an area as environmentally sensitive as the SUDOE space.

#### Beneficiaries:

- Public bodies: national, regional, and local authorities; development agencies; environmental services; units specialising in risk management; town and territorial planning units; environmental agencies; meteorological institutes and similar bodies; nature reserves (regional, national); and civil defence authorities.
- Business associations or companies specialising in territorial diagnosis; impact analysis; territorial assessments; analysis of damage, etc.; associations or clusters specialising in the sectors most affected by the main natural or technological risks; and research institutions.

**Geographical range:** No specific territorial approach is proposed for the application of these types. A heavy involvement of public players and representatives of specialised sectors is recommended with the aim of developing joint work protocols that can be exported to the SUDOE space as a whole and to other areas with similar problems.

## 2.A.6.2 Guiding principles for selecting operations (PI 5b).

For investment priority 5b the guidelines proposed for the selection of operations are in keeping with that proposed for each specific objective and include:

1. Natural spaces, urban and rural areas: priority is given to prevention actions for natural protected areas and urban and rural spaces with a high degree of natural and population sensitivity that comply with common risk management criteria and similar interventions in the States.
2. Risks going beyond a regional or national impact: priority will be given to actions that go beyond a mere regional or national impact in which without cooperation it is not possible to intervene concerning the risk in an efficient and effective manner. In other words priority will be given to projects on risks with external effects that extend well beyond the frontier and require joint intervention measures to guarantee their success.
3. Priority will be given to interventions addressing basic intersectoral and transregional problems.
4. Projects showing a high capacity of demonstration and transferability to other areas of the SUDOE space and other cooperation spaces will be encouraged.
5. Actions involving the civil population and citizen participation both from the point of view of planning and risk detection and also in aspects of natural and technological catastrophes together with apprenticeship and preventive training.

## 2.A.6.5 Productivity indicators (by investment priorities) (PI 5b).

**Table 13: Common productivity indicators specific to the programme (PI 5b)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Population benefitting from measures of protection against natural risks	No. of people	20% of the population of the SUDOE space	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

DRAFT

**2.A.1. PRIORITY AXIS 5: PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROMOTING  
THE EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES**

## 2.A.2 Justification of the establishing of a priority axis to cover more than one thematic objective

n.a.

## 2.A.3 Basis for calculating Union aid

This will be defined later on.

## 2.A.4 Investment priority 6c (PI 6c).

***The protection, promotion, and development of the cultural and natural heritage***

## 2.A.5 Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and the results expected (PI 6c).

**Specific Objective 1: Improving the economic importance of the common natural and cultural heritage notable in a sustainable development logic.**

**Results that the member states aim to achieve with the aid of the Union**

The diagnosis points out the need to reduce human activity in regions characterised by a large number of cultural and environmental resources and which at the same time are subjected to great anthropic pressure. Moreover, the tourist sector and the natural and cultural heritage is of paramount importance in the economic development of the SUDOE space, as this is based to a large extent on the heritage and environmental quality of the territory. These aspects show the importance of this investment priority in the PO.

Through this specific objective the programme promotes the development of actions that encourage on the one hand the reduction of the impact of human activity on the cultural and natural heritage together with the raising of awareness of our environmental obligations in tourist areas and in sectors of forestry and agricultural exploitation. On the other hand, it also promotes the restoration and highlighting of the heritage and the improving of the skills



of the players to develop innovative practices and to generate added value by means of tourist exploitation or that of natural resources. In this way it is proposed to contribute to the economic development of the territory by encouraging control over the impact on natural resources and thus promote solutions aimed at reducing conflict as to use and the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage characteristic of this space.

The most significant results expected are the development of sustainable strategies and management plans for natural resources or those of tourism and the increasing of the economic value of natural and cultural spaces.

**Table 14: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 6c)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value	Base year	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Number of improved strategies / management plans for the economic highlighting of natural and cultural resources	No.	12	2013	12	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

## 2.A.6 Actions to be financed within the framework of the investment priority (PI 6c).

### 2.A.6.1 Description of the type of actions to be financed with examples or their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including when appropriate the identification of the main target groups, the specific territories, the recipients, and the types of beneficiaries (PI 6c).

This investment priority is developed by means of the following action categories:

- Encouraging sustainable development and environmental impact mitigation strategies in tourist areas and the economic exploitation of natural areas (forests, agricultural areas, water supply, ...)

It includes sustainable tourism strategies and sustainable management plans for resources including actions designed to mitigate the impact of human activities (water consumption, energy consumption, territorial consumption, conflicts of use).

It will also promote the establishing or strengthening of the agreements entered into so as to set up solutions that take into account sustainable development, the improving of systems of governance, the adaptation of the territorial strategies of the development and mobilisation of policy-makers, technical operators, and users. In particular the following actions are promoted: the identification of practices, transnational analyses between different comparable geographical sectors, public consultation processes, and the establishing of strategies and action plans.

- **Actions designed to improve knowledge of the common cultural and natural heritage and the economic potential of natural areas**

This includes drawing up inventories, the exchanging of information, the carrying out of studies, an environmental and heritage assessment and a diagnosis, and the creation of scale observatories with the programme.

- **Actions to create and promote internationally recognised tourist products from the natural and cultural heritage**

This includes the promotion, communication, and marketing of common tourist products based on the natural and cultural heritage to promote the growth of the green economy through eco-innovation and eco-efficiency, or which assess natural resources with the objective of promoting eco-tourism. Likewise encouragement will be given to actions that aim to develop tourism incorporating the preservation and safeguarding of the natural, cultural, and economic heritage and limiting dependence or the impact of the seasonal effect. It also includes pilot action designed to restore and preserve the heritage, historical monuments (the UNESCO), the countryside (including agricultural landscapes), recognised natural locations (major locations, nature reserves, etc. ...) or areas with a great variety of fauna or flora, with the objective of the economic highlighting of tourist destinations and the strengthening of the visibility and identity of the SUDOE space. The target public for the actions anticipated will be in particular the key players of the tourist sector (including the cultural and environmental heritage): local authorities, and environmental and tourist services; and on the other hand those in charge of the economic development of the territory at a regional level such as development agents and economic operators.

- **Actions of the economic valuation of products resulting from the exploitation of forests and natural resources**

Woods and agricultural land cover a large part of the SUDOE area and play an important role in the economic and environmental matters of the space. Forest and agro-food activities represent specific strengths that should be reinforced by cooperation. In order to do so the actions supported by the PO can develop pilot experiences that promote the highlighting of natural resources (within the framework of an integrated management protocol for forest areas, for example); and the constitution of transnational activities (denominations of origin, networks, etc.) that strengthen the creation of sales openings for products related to the exploitation of local resources, together with the improving of their use in construction, energy, food, etc., including agricultural and forestry waste products.

The actions that can be supported are connected with the value chain (from production to the market) as a whole and in this manner encourage the development and the improvement of practices and techniques related to agriculture and forestry exploitation (and the economic valuation of the waste products). Pilot projects of actions with an innovative aspect are also included here. The action types included in this priority are designed to develop the rational use of resources (water, fisheries, forestry products, home-grown crops, GM crops, and minerals) and recycling with the aim of reducing the production of waste, the use of treatments, atmospheric pollution emissions, and soil and water pollution. For this type of wide-ranging projects, priority will be given to activities with an impact going beyond a regional or national scale and with an expanding application in an environment of cooperation so that it can be carried out efficiently.

**Results expected:** Among the main results the following stand out: reducing the impact of human activities on the cultural and natural heritage together with awareness of environmental obligations in tourist areas; restoring and enhancing the heritage and improving the capacities of the players to develop innovative practices, and increasing the frequency of visits to natural and cultural locations outside the high season.

### Beneficiaries

- Public bodies: national, regional, and local authorities and their groupings including the transnational scale (European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, EGTC), networks of parks, nature reserves, associations, and tourist sites; public management establishments (nature reserves); economic, environmental, and tourist development services; development agencies, universities, and research institutions; and regional and local development agencies.
- Economic operators and companies, NGOs: specialists in the tourist and environmental sector and in the improvement of local and territorial development.

**Geographical range:** No specific territorial approach is proposed for the application of these types. The participation of players from emblematic and tourist natural areas of the SUDOE space, together with from territories with a high level of the historical and cultural heritage, is recommended.

### 2.A.6.2 Guiding principles for selecting operations (PI 6c).

For investment priority 6c the guidelines proposed for the selection of operations are in keeping with that proposed for each specific objective and include:

1. The operations will be in keeping with regional and inter-regional strategies and will be classified as integrated management actions. In order to achieve this they will be aided by the participation of the public authorities and of players with the capacity of deploying the results of the projects on a large scale.
2. The actions will be aimed at the areas that are most fragile owing to man's activities and at the major locations of the SUDOE that are noteworthy for their cultural and natural heritage and their attractions in general.
3. The projects to be carried out must have a strong demonstrative capacity and be of significant interest at a transnational level, in such a way that the results can be transferred to other areas of the SUDOE space and to other cooperation spaces, demonstrating the strong added value provided by cooperation in its development.
4. Any valuation action proposed must put its faith in sustainable development and priority will be given to aspects of preservation and the mitigation of the impact. Actions of promotion, brand creation, marketing, etc. must be in keeping with territorial and national strategies on the subject.

### 2.A.6.5 Productivity indicators (by investment priority) (PI 6c).

**Table 15: Common productivity indicators that are specific to the programme (PI 6c)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Number of locations supported/valued that are part of sustainable development management processes or processes for the preservation of the environment and the mitigation of the effect of human activities.	No. of locations	50	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

#### 2.A.4 Investment priority 6d (PI 6d).

*The protection and restoration of biodiversity and the soil and the promotion of services linked to the ecosystem, including the RED NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures*

#### 2.A.5 Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priority and results expected (PI 6d).

**Specific Objective 1: Preserving and restoring the biodiversity of natural locations of the SUDOE with the aim of maintaining the ecological quality of the spaces, wellbeing, and the quality of life.**

This objective concentrates on encouraging responsibility for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. In order to achieve this the following challenge is pursued: reconciling the preservation of biodiversity with development. It is a case of preserving the natural and heritage capital, which are both factors of development as well as of attraction, by means of providing services linked to the ecosystem that can serve as a source of job creation without the risk of delocalisation (eco-tourism, ecological engineering, agricultural and forestry activities...).

In order to do so, the setting up of joint strategies for the protection and restoration of ecosystems as well as actions of the conservation, management, and highlighting from a transnational perspective of the various natural areas of the SUDOE space (mountain areas and nature reserves, rivers, lagoons and their surrounding areas, among others) are essential to be able to plan a sustainable development policy in the medium and long term. In the same way, actions of communication and awareness allow the latter to be raised in favour of the protection and conservation of the environment.

Two types of results are anticipated: on the one hand, an improvement of the consideration of the ecological quality of the spaces, habitats, and emblematic and threatened species by means of the carrying out of actions of conditioning and development, together with territorial planning, and on the other improved operation of the ecological systems and the services carried out in the natural areas in the medium and long term.

This investment priority can contribute in particular to the following:

- The maintenance of ecosystems, the protection and restoration of the natural environment or semi-natural urban, peri-urban, rural, or coastal environments, as well as the conservation of the quality of landscapes and natural spaces as a factor of the attractiveness of the territory.
- The possibility of taking into account in the planning documents a firm bid for ecological continuity with the aim of developing a sustainable vision of the conditioning of the territory, together with the concerted management of natural areas and resources (water, timber/forestry products, soils, etc.).

**Table 16: Indicators of specific results of the programme (by specific objectives) (PI 6d)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Reference value	Year of reference	Expected value (2023)	Source data	Report frequency
	Number of improved strategies / management plans taking part in the protection of emblematic natural sites.	No.	10	2012	12	Progress reports on the projects	Annual

## 2.A.6 Actions to be financed within the framework of the investment priority (PI 6d).

### 2.A.6.1 Description of the type of actions to be financed with examples or their expected contribution to the specific objectives, including when appropriate the identification of the main target groups, the specific territories, the recipients, and the types of beneficiaries (PI 6d).

Improving biodiversity and carrying out actions to the ecosystem by means of transnational cooperation involves carrying out activities of the exchanging of knowledge and practices aimed at improving the efficiency of investments and the management model, thus responding to a bid for the restoration and preservation of the ecological quality of the territory. Given that it is a case of the adaptation of conditioning and management practices carried out in different natural surroundings, this allows in particular a strong bid in favour of the heritage and ecological continuity with the priority objective of the restoration and preservation of the environment.

The exchanges, studies and actions carried out within the framework of cooperation projects must allow the determining of the most efficient measures that must be set in motion in order to achieve the objective of the preservation and valuation of the biodiversity of the natural environment and its contribution to the promoting of a green economy through eco-innovation and eco-efficiency.

The different types of action proposed are as follows:

- **The defining and setting up of joint strategies for the protection and restoration of ecosystems and the integrated management of resources and natural areas**

The programme will promote in particular the carrying out of management plans for protected spaces with the objective of fitting the interventions within a concerted field. It will also promote the drawing up of planning documents and the carrying out of action to protect and preserve natural spaces and protected species and habitats, together with measures for addressing the problems of erosion, desertification, deforestation, and the organic matter present in the soil. The actions may include natural environments located in urban and peri-urban areas.

Likewise, the actions to be carried out will stress exchange and cooperation, encouraging the coordination of the players and the strengthening of their capacities together with the pooling of knowledge so as to achieve the rational use of natural resources, especially water. In order to do so the promoting of integrated management and governance strategies is anticipated, which contributes towards the fight against pollution in the aquatic medium, the improving of the quality of the water resources, and the encouraging of agricultural practices favouring the preservation and reclaiming of wetlands in particular on a transnational scale (common river basins).

- **Improving knowledge**

The programme will support cooperation, the exchanging of experiences, practices, and the carrying out of studies with an interest that is not merely restricted to the local framework. The objective is to improve the level of protection and the state of preservation of the natural land, aquatic, and maritime habitat, together with protected natural spaces and sites of special interest, and also to improve knowledge and management. The Programme may also support actions allowing the comparing of the regulations and the levels of quality of the resources as well as transnational observatories.

- **The creation of tools for joint/shared work**

The creation of these tools is anticipated with the objective of encouraging the observation and follow-up of natural spaces and of species and in this way of allowing the use of natural resources, establishing indicators leading to the reduction of their use, together with the carrying out of actions of environmental impact that allow the reducing of the ecological

footprint. Transnational cooperation must generate scale economics in the production of these tools and allow the sharing of resources and skills, models, products, and operative solutions. As a result of their development, this will allow the improving of the management of natural areas, the restoration of ecosystems, and the treatment of water and soil pollution in different areas of the SUDOE space.

- **The conditioning of pilot projects or the carrying out of tasks of ecological engineering designed to establish a network of ecological continuity (green and blue section), including urban and peri-urban areas**

Among others the following actions are proposed: the suppression or conditioning of obstacles to ecological continuity, the re-establishing of the ecological continuity of the watercourse, the restoration and management of degraded resources in such a way as to support the re-establishing of the operation of ecosystems and ecological continuity (wetland areas, ecological corridors, biodiversity reserves ...) and action to manage and restore the ecological infrastructures necessary for the sustainable development of protected environments or those identified in the planning documents and those of ecological coherence.

**Results expected:** Improving the consideration of the ecological quality of the habitats and emblematic and threatened species in territorial planning, and the improvement of ecological operation and of the services carried out in natural areas in the long term.

### Beneficiaries

- Public bodies: national, regional, and local authorities and their groupings including the transnational scale (European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, EGTC), networks of parks, nature reserves, associations, and tourist sites; public management establishments (nature reserves, management trade unions); economic, environmental, and tourist development services; development agencies, universities, and research institutions; and regional and local development agencies.
- Economic operators and companies, in particular specialists in the tourist and environmental sector and in the improvement of local and territorial development, agricultural and stockbreeders' trade-union associations, and consular chambers.
- NGOs and pertinent networks.



**Geographical range:** No specific territorial area is proposed for the application of these types. The strong participation of players from emblematic natural areas of the SUDOE space is recommended.

## 2.A.6.2 Guiding principles for selecting operations (PI 6d).

For investment priority 6d, the guidelines proposed for the selection of operations are in keeping with that proposed for each specific objective and include:

1. The operations will be in keeping with regional and inter-regional strategies and will be classified as integrated management actions. In order to achieve this they will be aided by the participation of the public authorities and of players with the capacity of deploying the results of the projects on a large scale.
2. Natural spaces of the RED NATURA 2000 or included in areas of protection or high ecological quality: priority will be given to activities involving areas and spaces included and classified within the *Red Natura 2000* and which are of high ecological, environmental, and landscape quality or which are emblematic in the SUDOE space: protected sites and/or sites located within the territory (nature reserves and natural built-up areas).
3. In wide-ranging projects priority will be given to activities with an impact that goes beyond a regional and national scale and which cannot be carried out efficiently unless they are applied in an environment of cooperation. In other words, projects needing collaboration to guarantee their success stand out, such as transnational observatories that must be limited to increase their impact and visibility.
4. The projects to be developed must have a strong demonstrative capacity and be of significant interest at a transnational level so that the results can be transferred to other areas of the SUDOE spaces and to other cooperation spaces, thus demonstrating the strong added value provided by cooperation. Priority will be given to interventions addressing new and/or emblematic problems that are intersectoral and shared on a transnational scale.

The exact selection modes will be defined in the order of publication of the anticipated call for projects.

#### 2.A.6.5 Productivity indicators (by investment priorities) (PI 6d).

**Table 17: Common productivity indicators that are specific to the programme (PI 6d)**

Identification	Indicator	Measuring unit	Expected value (2023)	Source of data	Report frequency
	Number of tools and models developed for improving knowledge and the management and ecological quality of the spaces of the SUDOE	No. of tools	12	Progress reports on projects	Annual