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QUICK TIPS

ACTIVITIES THAT QUALIFY FOR RIO MARKERS IN MIGRATION PROGRAMMES

The NDICI Global Europe Regulation established a target to dedicate at least 30% of the instrument's budget to support climate objectives in the period 2021-2027. It also specifies that the NDICI Global Europe will contribute to the ambition of providing 7.5% of annual spending in 2024 and 10% in 2026 and 2027 towards biodiversity objectives.

The President of the European Commission, in her 2021 State of the Union speech, pledged an additional four billion euro towards climate goals. A pledge was also made to double the EU's external funding for biodiversity, compared to 2014-2020, in particular for the most vulnerable countries.

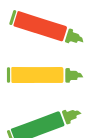
These renewed targets significantly raise the EU ambition on climate and biodiversity finance to partner countries, reflecting the urgency called upon by the scientific

community to address the climate and biodiversity crises and the ambition of the European Green Deal.

Four 'Rio markers' were developed by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to identify the contribution of actions to the objectives of UN Rio Conventions (two markers related to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, one to the Convention on Biological Diversity and one to the Convention to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation). The Rio markers are used by DG INTPA to keep track of financial contributions to the Rio themes. In line with a methodology adopted by the OECD DAC, there are three possible scores (0, 1 and 2) for Rio markers. DG INTPA assesses that a certain percentage of an action's budget can be considered to contribute to a Rio theme, based on the score of the corresponding Rio marker, as follows:



**if Biodiversity,
Desertification
or Climate Change**



IS NOT TARGETED

IS A SIGNIFICANT OBJECTIVE

IS A PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE

RM=0

0% BUDGET

RM=1

40% BUDGET

RM=2

100% BUDGET

The scoring must be carried out in accordance with the corresponding [OECD DAC directives](#).¹

An activity can be marked as "principal" when the objective (biodiversity, combating desertification, climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation) is explicitly stated as fundamental in the design of, or the motivation for, the activity. To be marked "significant", the objective must be explicitly stated but is not a fundamental driver or motivation for undertaking and designing the activity.

¹ [OECD DAC \(2024\) Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting System \(CRS\) and the Annual DAC Questionnaire. Annexes – modules D and E.](#)



Biodiversity

An activity should be classified as biodiversity-related if it promotes at least one of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity: (1) the conservation of biodiversity; (2) sustainable use of its components (ecosystems, species or genetic resources); or (3) fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of the utilisation of genetic resources.

Eligibility criteria are as follows:

The activity contributes to:

- a) Protection or enhancement of ecosystems, species or genetic resources through in-situ or ex-situ conservation, or remedying existing environmental damage; **or**
- b) Integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services concerns within recipient countries' development objectives and economic decision-making, through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research; **or**
- c) Developing countries' efforts to meet their obligations under the Convention.

The activity will be scored '**principal objective**' (i.e. RM2) if it directly and explicitly aims to achieve one or more of the above three criteria.

Typical activities in migration actions that can qualify for the Biodiversity Rio marker include:

- ▶ Workshops and certification programs on sustainable land management, biodiversity conservation, and climate-resilient agriculture for displaced, host, and origin communities;
- ▶ Cash-for-work programmes focused on ecosystem restoration, including reforestation, wetland rehabilitation, and sustainable agricultural infrastructure development;
- ▶ Cash transfer systems to enhance food security and support biodiversity conservation in displacement-affected areas;
- ▶ Support for income-generating activities tailored to local environmental conditions, including beekeeping, small ruminant farming, vegetable production, backyard gardening, and fruit tree cultivation, ensuring sustainable use of natural resources;
- ▶ Establishment of natural flood defenses, such as mangroves and artificial lakes, to mitigate flooding and erosion while protecting biodiversity;
- ▶ Community-based intervention for water treatment using natural filtration systems like wetlands;
- ▶ Land-use planning processes for displaced and host communities to integrate considerations on biodiversity, critical habitats, and ecological corridors;
- ▶ Training sessions on environmental awareness and eco-friendly operational protocols for border agencies;
- ▶ Clean water access infrastructure to benefit both ecosystems and local communities;
- ▶ Promotion of biodiversity-friendly livelihoods, such as sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism, and renewable energy projects, to reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems;
- ▶ Facilitation of alternative migration pathways that integrate environmental sustainability and ecosystem protection.



Combating Desertification

An activity should be classified as desertification-related if it aims at combating desertification or mitigating the effects of drought in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas through prevention and/or reduction of land degradation, rehabilitation of partly degraded land, or reclamation of desertified land.

Eligibility criteria are as follows:

The activity contributes to:

- a) Protecting or enhancing dryland ecosystems or remedying existing environmental damage; **or**
- b) Integrating desertification concerns in recipient countries' development objectives through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research; **or**
- c) Developing countries' efforts to meet their obligations under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

The activity will be scored '**principal objective**' (i.e. RM2) if it directly and explicitly aims to achieve one or more of the above criteria, including in the context of the realisation of national, sub-regional or regional action programmes.

Typical activities in migration actions that can qualify for the Desertification Rio marker include:

- ▶ Community workshops designed to develop and implement sustainable resource management plans, addressing migration-related pressures on land and natural resources e.g. deforestation.
- ▶ Community-led projects focusing on water harvesting, reforestation, and soil stabilization in arid and semi-arid regions within migrant origin, transit, and host areas.
- ▶ Training programs for local authorities and community leaders on advanced tools and techniques for monitoring desertification and sustainable land management.
- ▶ Education sessions, vocational training programs, and public awareness campaigns targeting migrants and host communities to promote the prevention and management of desertification and land degradation.
- ▶ Programmes documenting and promoting traditional and local technologies for sustainable resource use, such as natural irrigation systems and indigenous soil conservation methods.
- ▶ Knowledge exchange platforms sharing practical conservation techniques for water, wood, and soil to ensure long-term environmental sustainability in migration-affected areas.



Climate Change Mitigation

An activity should be classified as climate change mitigation-related if it contributes to the objective of stabilising greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system by promoting efforts to reduce or limit GHG emissions or enhance GHG sequestration.

Eligibility criteria are the following:

The activity contributes to:

- a) The mitigation of climate change by limiting anthropogenic emissions of GHGs, including gases regulated by the Montreal Protocol; **or**
- c) The protection and/or enhancement of GHG sinks and reservoirs; **or**
- d) The integration of climate change concerns with the recipient countries' development objectives through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research; **or**

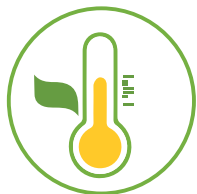
Developing countries' efforts to meet their obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The activity will be scored '**principal objective**' (i.e. RM2) if it directly and explicitly aims to achieve one or more of the above four criteria.

Typical activities in migration actions that can qualify for the Climate Change Mitigation Rio marker include:

- ▶ Retrofitting of facilities in camps, reception centers, and community spaces with energy-efficient lighting, advanced insulation, and natural ventilation systems. Installation of renewable energy technologies such as solar panels and wind turbines, alongside water-efficient systems and modern waste management technologies.
- ▶ Adoption of energy-efficient modular equipment and vehicles for border operations, including the transition to low-emission fleets powered by electric, hydrogen, or biofuel technologies. Implementation of fuel-saving measures through driver training, route optimization, and demand management strategies. Use of battery-powered drones for remote patrols and portable solar chargers to reduce dependence on non-renewable energy.

- ▶ Workforce reskilling programmes targeting the transition from at-risk sectors, such as coal, to green energy industries, with training in solar panel installation, wind turbine maintenance, and energy auditing. Integration of renewable energy certifications into national education and reskilling frameworks for migrants and local workers.
- ▶ Delivery of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for forcibly displaced populations and host communities, with a focus on green sectors like recycling, renewable energy, energy efficiency, agroforestry, and smart agriculture.
- ▶ Local sourcing of goods to reduce transportation emissions in supporting displaced populations and host communities. Optimization of supply chain logistics to minimize unnecessary transportation, adoption of sustainable packaging, and reduction of carbon footprints in distribution networks.
- ▶ Piloting and scaling of innovative green financial products linked to remittances, such as savings plans, agricultural insurance, and pay-as-you-go green technologies, complemented by financial and digital literacy training for remittance-receiving families.



Climate Change Adaptation

An activity should be classified as climate change adaptation-related if it intends to reduce the vulnerability of human or natural systems to the current and expected impacts of climate change, including climate variability, by maintaining or increasing resilience, through increased ability to adapt to, or absorb, climate change stresses, shocks and variability and/or by helping reduce exposure to them.

This encompasses a range of activities from information and knowledge generation to capacity development, planning and the implementation of climate change adaptation actions.

Eligibility criteria are the following:

An activity is eligible for the climate change adaptation marker if:

- a) The climate change adaptation objective is explicitly indicated in the activity documentation; **and**
- b) The activity contains specific measures targeting the definition above.

To guide scoring, a three-step approach is recommended as a 'best practice', in particular to justify a Rio Marker 2 score:

- ▶ **Setting out the context of risks, vulnerabilities and impacts related to climate variability and climate change:** for a project to be considered as one that contributed to adaptation to climate change, the context of climate vulnerability should be set out clearly using a robust evidence base. This could take a variety of forms, including use of material from existing analyses and reports, or original, bespoke climate vulnerability assessment analysis carried out as part of the preparation of a project.
- ▶ **Stating the intent to address the identified risks, vulnerabilities and impacts in project documentation:** the project should set out how it intends to address the context- and location-specific climate change vulnerabilities, as set out in existing analyses, reports or the project's climate vulnerability assessment.
- ▶ **Demonstrating a clear and direct link between the identified risks, vulnerabilities and impacts and the specific project activities:** the project should explicitly address risk and vulnerabilities under current and future climate change as identified in the project documentation.

Typical activities in migration actions that can qualify for the Climate Change Adaptation Rio marker include:

- ▶ Piloting and scaling of innovative green financial products linked to remittances, such as savings plans, agricultural insurance, and pay-as-you-go green technologies, complemented by financial and digital literacy training for remittance-receiving families.
- ▶ Integration of agroecology and climate-resilient practices into agricultural support programmes at origin or host communities, promoting the cultivation of climate-adapted, nutrition-rich crops, establishment of genetic resource banks, application of biological pest control methods, and adoption of resilient farming techniques such as minimum tillage, with an emphasis on circular economy principles.
- ▶ Provision of tailored extension services and training programs including weather forecasts, climate vulnerability assessments, and sustainable agricultural practices for households, family farms, rural enterprises, and MSMEs.
- ▶ Distribution of agricultural inputs and microcredit schemes in return and hosting areas to promote equitable access to resources while addressing climate change risks and fostering sustainable livelihoods.
- ▶ Deployment of spatial targeting strategies for cash grants to support climate-smart agriculture and inclusive livelihood projects in areas affected by population displacement, ensuring optimal allocation of resources for maximum impact.
- ▶ Construction and rehabilitation of small-scale, climate-resilient infrastructure to enhance agricultural productivity and prevent resource degradation, such as water conservation systems and erosion control structures.
- ▶ Upgrading of essential infrastructure in displacement-affected areas to alleviate pressure on social services and reduce vulnerability to climate-related shocks, including schools, healthcare facilities, and renewable energy systems.

- ▶ Development and dissemination of tools and frameworks for public and private stakeholders to integrate remittance and diaspora investment strategies into climate resilience programmes.
- ▶ Implementation of targeted awareness campaigns to educate migrants and diaspora communities on the potential of leveraging remittances for climate adaptation, with a focus on empowering women and vulnerable groups.
- ▶ Creation of impact investment mechanisms for diaspora investors that prioritize climate resilience, offering mentoring programmes for women and youth and fostering investment in climate adaptation solutions.
- ▶ Organization of training programs on climate vulnerability and adaptation strategies for remittance-receiving households, including support for designing and constructing climate-resilient housing solutions.

FURTHER EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES, LINKED TO MIGRATION-RELEVANT DAC CODES

15190 - FACILITATION OF ORDERLY, SAFE, REGULAR AND RESPONSIBLE MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Actions under DAC Code 15190, while primarily focused on facilitating orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration, present opportunities to integrate climate goals into specific activities. For instance, migration policies can promote green and climate-resilient development in origin and destination communities, and remittances can be directed towards investments that enhance adaptive capacity, energy efficiency, and sustainable resource use.

Infrastructure projects, such as shelters for migrant communities, can be designed with environmental considerations to minimize ecological harm. Efforts to combat irregular migration can incorporate collaboration with environmental authorities to mitigate potential damage to sensitive habitats, like marine reserves, and adopt operational methods with a lower environmental footprint. Labor migration programmes provide another entry point, as they can include upskilling initiatives to develop green skills, supporting sustainable industries in origin and destination countries. These programs can be tailored to communities impacted by climate change or environmental degradation, aligning migration-related actions with broader climate and environmental objectives.

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO MITIGATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Workforce reskilling programs in green energy industries (e.g., solar panel installation, wind turbine maintenance).
- ▶ Integration of renewable energy certifications into national education and reskilling frameworks for migrants and local workers.
- ▶ Recruitment of seasonal workers for green sector employment
- ▶ Promote remittance use for green businesses and climate adaptation initiatives.
- ▶ Develop certification models for green skills aligned with green industry needs.

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO ADAPTATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Empower returnees with eco-friendly livelihood skills.
- ▶ Organize training programs for remittance-receiving households on climate vulnerability and adaptation strategies.
- ▶ Engage skilled diasporas in supporting green initiatives through mentoring and policy development.
- ▶ Establish awareness campaigns for migrants and diaspora members on remittance use for climate adaptation.
- ▶ Create local adaptation strategies (e.g. cooperative management of natural resources).

152 - CONFLICT, PEACE & SECURITY**15210 - SECURITY SYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND REFORM**

DAC Code 15210 targets the strengthening and modernization of security systems to promote accountability, effectiveness, and democratic alignment. Opportunities for integrating environmental and climate considerations include incorporating climate security and environmental factors into conflict prevention and management strategies. This can involve leveraging early warning systems and climate modeling to anticipate and address climate-driven crises. Additionally, programs supporting the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants can integrate green approaches, fostering sustainable livelihoods and environmental restoration in post-conflict settings.

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO MITIGATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Adoption of energy-efficient modular equipment and vehicles for border operations (e.g. low-emission fleets, fuel-saving measures).
- ▶ Use of battery-powered drones and portable solar chargers for sustainable energy use in patrols.
- ▶ Promote sustainable fleet management (e.g., cleaner energy sources, route optimization).
- ▶ Implement sustainable procurement practices (e.g. reducing plastic use in field supplies).

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO ADAPTATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Conduct research on the links between environmental degradation, climate change, and security to inform strategies.
- ▶ Facilitate collaboration between law enforcement and environmental agencies to protect natural habitats during operations.
- ▶ Provide environmental awareness training and integrate eco-friendly protocols in border management.

720 - EMERGENCY RESPONSE**72010 - MATERIAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS**

DAC Code 72010 focuses on the immediate needs of displaced populations through the provision of essential services, infrastructure, and support. Opportunities for integrating environmental and climate considerations under this chapter include incorporating sustainable and climate-resilient practices in the construction and management of infrastructure for refugees and displaced persons. This can involve integrating environmental standards into the development of reception centers, shelters, and essential facilities, ensuring they are energy-efficient, hazard-resistant, and sustainably built.

Programmes can also promote green job opportunities for displaced populations, such as cash-for-work schemes tied to natural resource management or climate-resilient infrastructure projects, fostering both immediate livelihoods and long-term environmental benefits. Additionally, building climate-resilient water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) systems can help meet the immediate needs of displaced persons while supporting sustainable natural resource management. Early warning systems and disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies can also play a role in guiding displacement planning and management, helping to minimize environmental harm and enhance the resilience of displaced communities to climate shocks. By aligning material assistance with green and climate-smart approaches, interventions under DAC 72010 can simultaneously address immediate humanitarian needs and contribute to environmental sustainability.

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO MITIGATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Retrofitting camps and reception centers with energy-efficient lighting, insulation, and natural ventilation.
- ▶ Renewable energy systems in refugee shelters and reception centers (e.g. solar panels, energy-efficient appliances).
- ▶ Comprehensive waste management programs in camps, including recycling, composting, and reduction of single-use plastics.

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO ADAPTATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Capacity-building for displaced persons in renewable energy installation, recycling, and sustainable agriculture.
- ▶ Community-based rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems in displacement camps.
- ▶ Disaster risk reduction (e.g. vegetation buffers, fire-resistant designs).
- ▶ Training workshops for displaced communities on climate adaptation strategies, sustainable land management, and conservation practices.

730 - EMERGENCY RESPONSE**73010 - IMMEDIATE POST-EMERGENCY RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION**

DAC Code 73010 encompass actions aiming to rebuild essential infrastructure and services in disaster or conflict-affected areas. Activities include restoring schools, healthcare centres, housing, and water systems, as well as clearing debris and providing temporary shelters. These efforts prioritize stabilizing communities and enabling a swift return to normalcy.

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO MITIGATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Reconstruction of disaster-affected schools and healthcare facilities using energy-efficient designs, renewable energy systems, and sustainable materials.
- ▶ Training local workers in green construction techniques, including the use of low-carbon materials and energy-saving technologies.
- ▶ Install renewable energy systems like rooftop solar panels in reconstructed settlements.

EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO ADAPTATION RIO MARKER

- ▶ Construction and rehabilitation of small-scale, climate-resilient infrastructure (e.g. water conservation systems, erosion control structures).
 - ▶ Flood-resistant and disaster-proof shelters and community facilities using sustainable designs adapted to specific climate risks.
 - ▶ Restore degraded ecosystems as natural buffers, including wetlands and mangroves, to protect communities from climate hazards.
 - ▶ Community-based early warning systems in displacement camps.
 - ▶ Rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems in reconstructed settlements to address water scarcity.
 - ▶ Integration of disaster risk reduction measures into rebuilding efforts (e.g. elevated housing in flood-prone areas).
-