



Greening EU Cooperation Toolbox

A toolbox to deliver on our environmental and climate objectives under the Global Gateway

Webinar 2: Spending Targets and Rio Markers

European Commission / EXACT - EU External Action Wiki

Greening EU Cooperation Toolbox

- Applicants
- Implementing Partners
- Economic Operators, Contractors and Experts
- > Systems
- > Contracts and Procurements
- > eCompanion
- > ePRAG
- > Intervention Cycle Management Guide



Climate and biodiversity spending targets

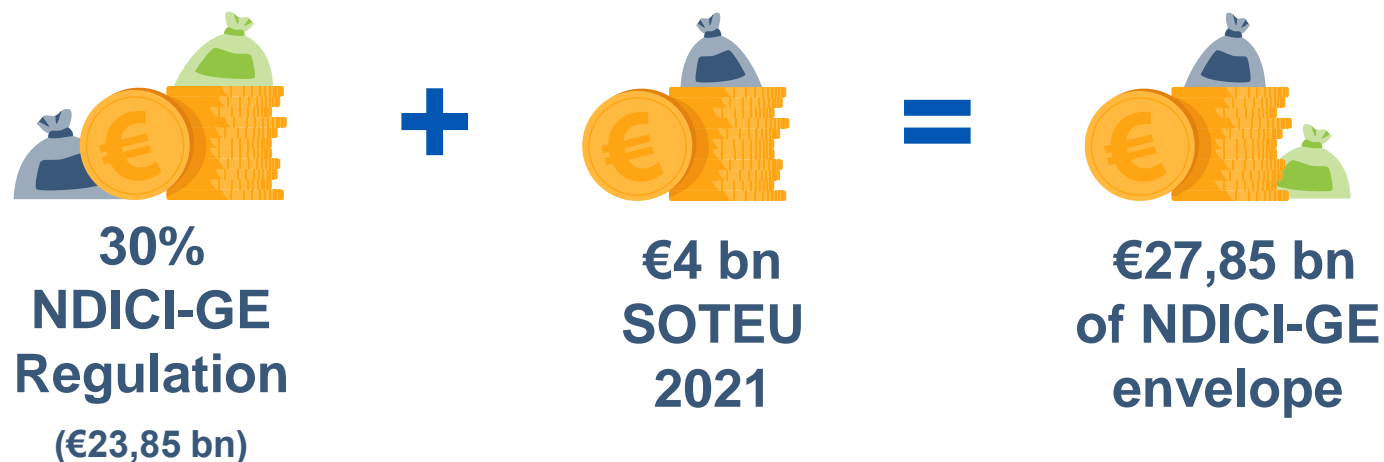


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Climate target (NDICI – Global Europe)

Total NDICI-GE budget: € 79,5 bn



For geographic budget line: 42%



Climate target (IPA III)



**18% increasing to
20% by 2027**

**IPA III Regulation
(€2,55 – €2.83 bn)**



Biodiversity target (NDICI – Global Europe and IPA III)



7.5% (in 2024)
10% (in 2026 and 2027)
(MFF)



**Doubling Biodiversity External
Funding**
(vs 2014 – 2020 baseline)
(SOTEU pledge)
€ 7 billion over 2021-27



Biodiversity target – expected contributions (unofficial)



For NDICI, complemented by the contribution from the thematic and rapid response pillars of NDICI-GE



Targets – Ukraine Facility and Reform & Growth Facility for the Western Balkans

Ukraine Facility

No specific climate and biodiversity targets

20% to climate change mitigation + climate change adaptation + environmental protection (incl. biodiversity) + green transition

Reform & Growth Facility for the WB

Contribute to 30% climate objectives

37% to climate objectives through the WBIF

Contribute to 7.5% (by 2024) and 10% (in 2026-27) biodiversity objectives



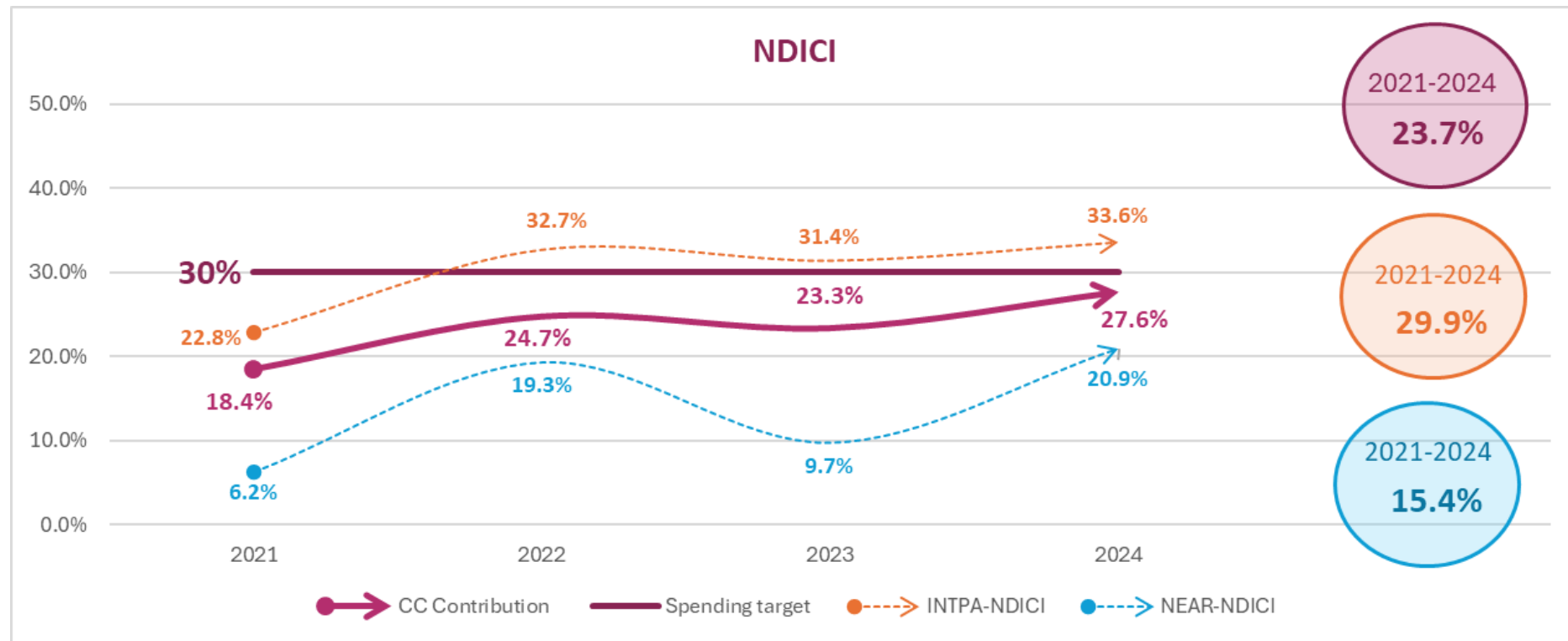
Progress to date – Climate Change contribution



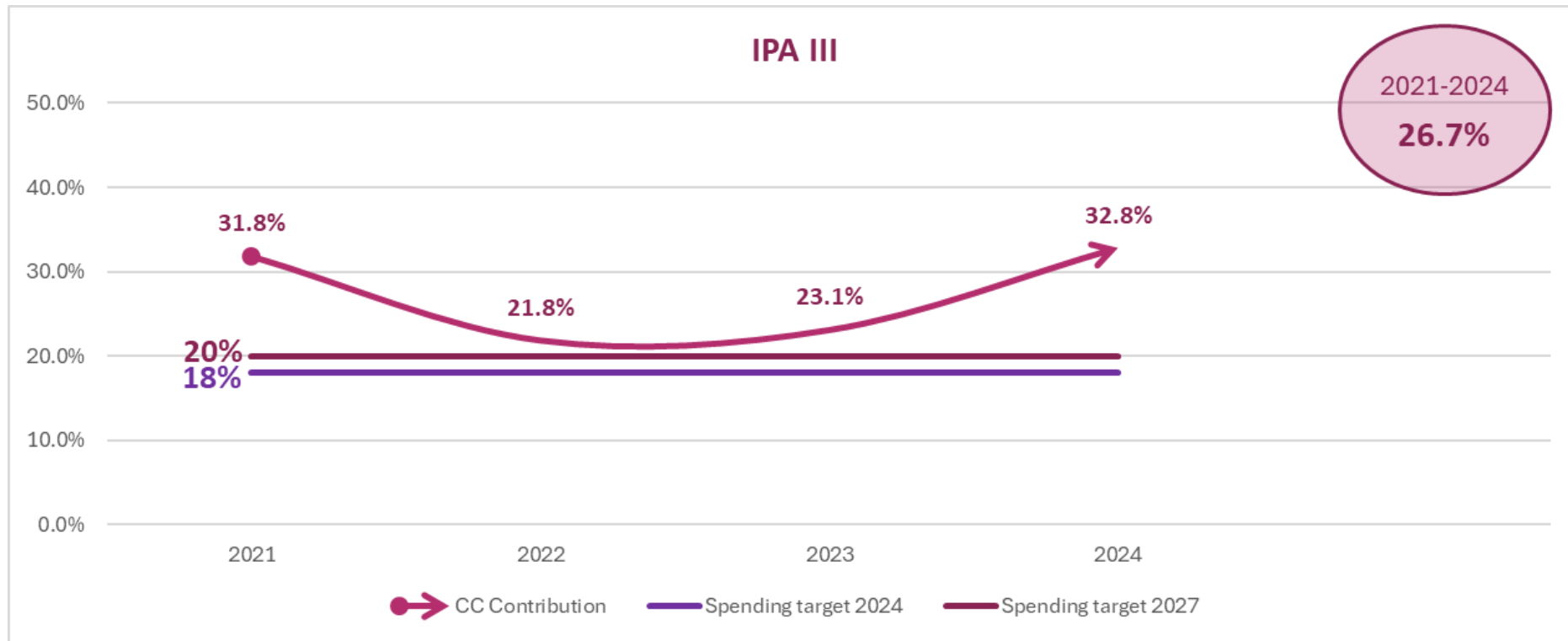
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CC contributions 2021-2024 vs targets

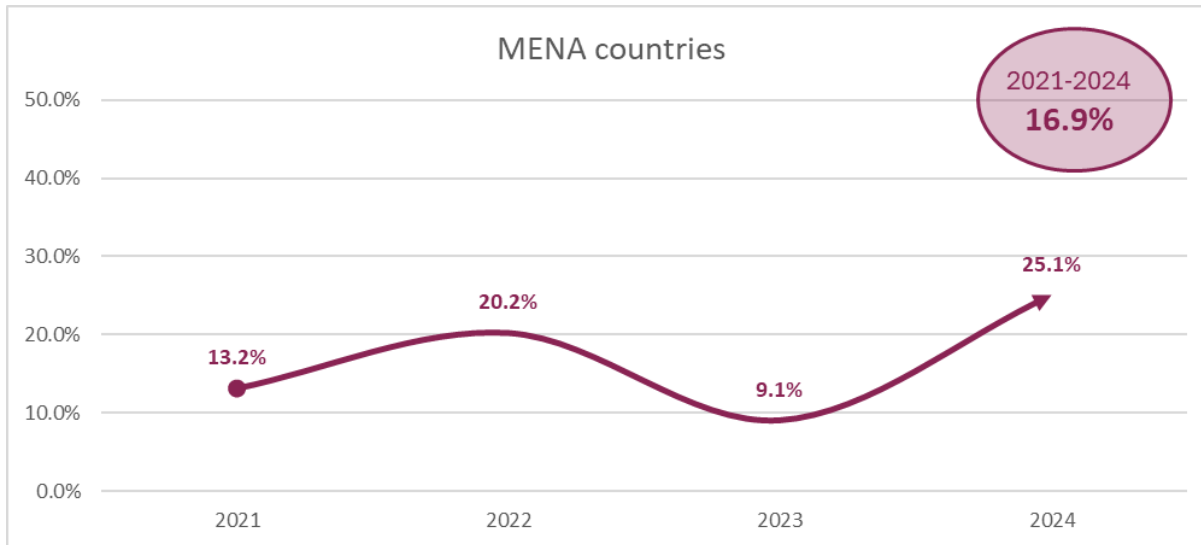


CC contributions 2021-2024 vs targets



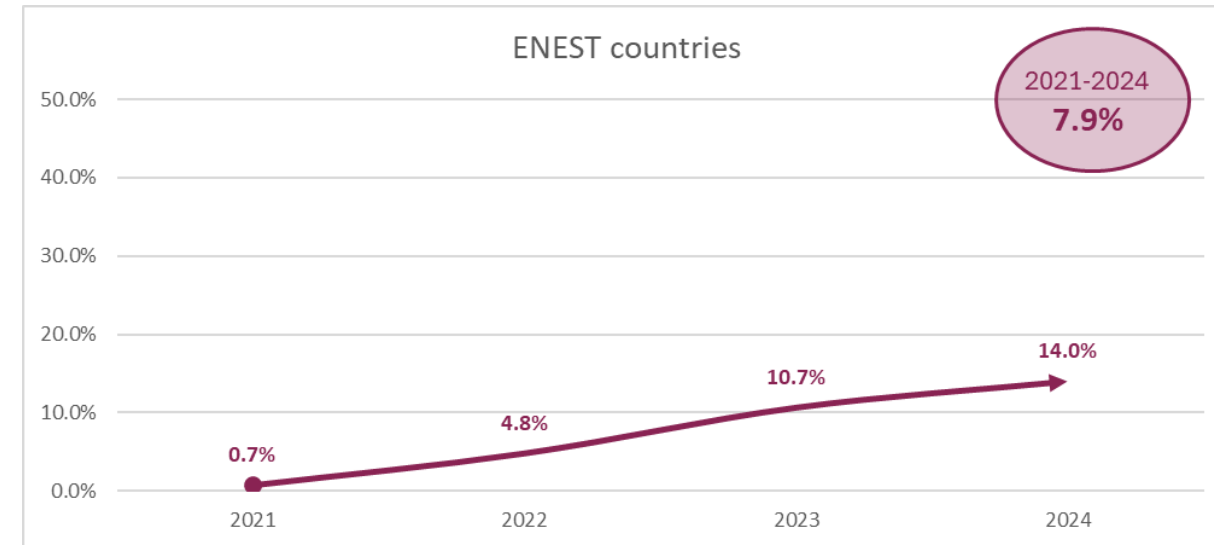
CC contributions 2021-2024 (provisional)

MENA & ENEST countries



MENA

- **NDICI actions**, all DGs
- filtered by countries + North Africa, regional
- regional actions encoded as unspecified developing countries are not included

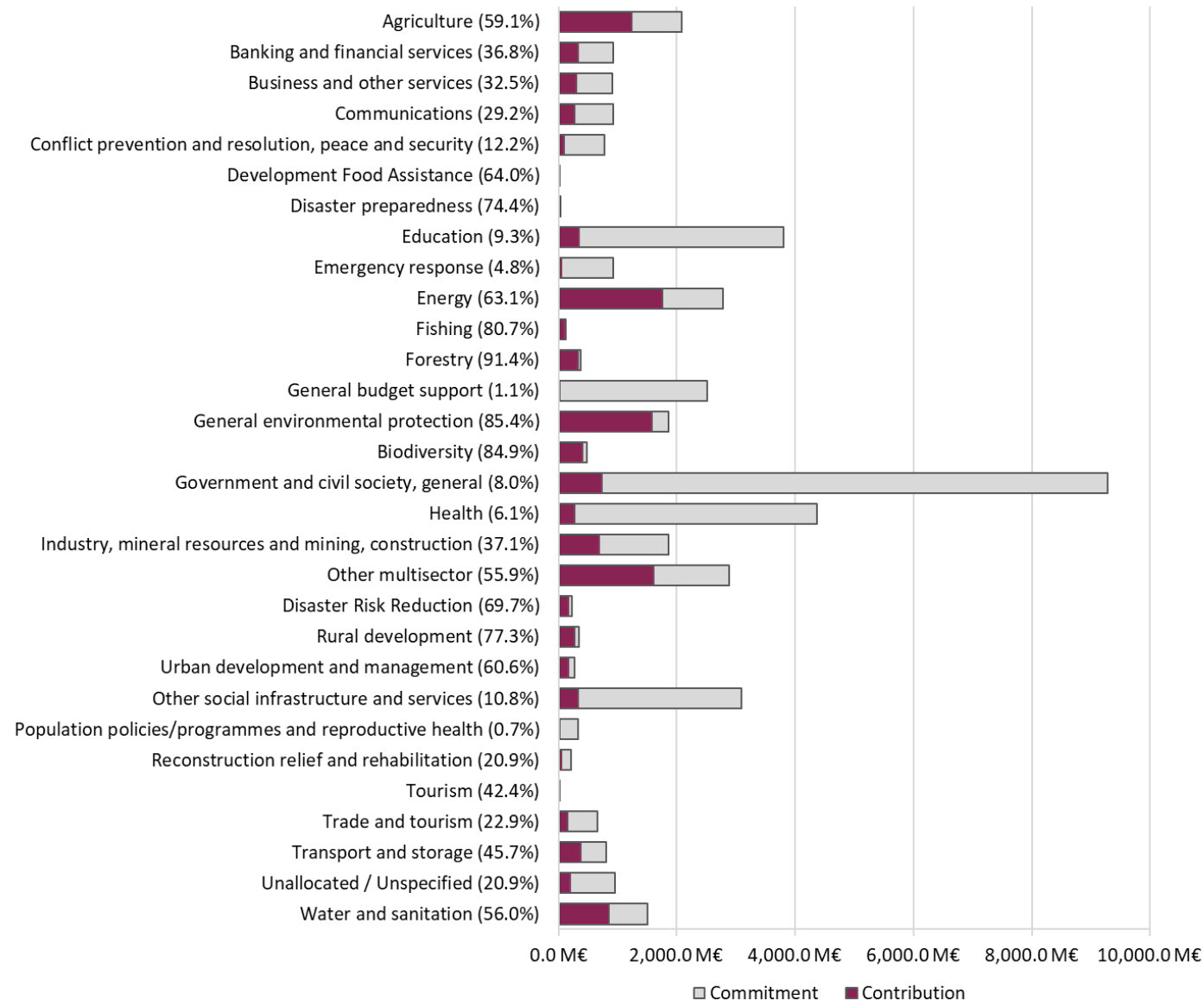


ENEST

- **NDICI actions**, all DGs
- filtered by regions (WB & Türkiye, ENP East, Regional Europe)
- regional actions encoded as unspecified developing countries are not included



CC contributions 2021-2024 – by Sectors



**INTPA + NEAR-
managed NDICI**

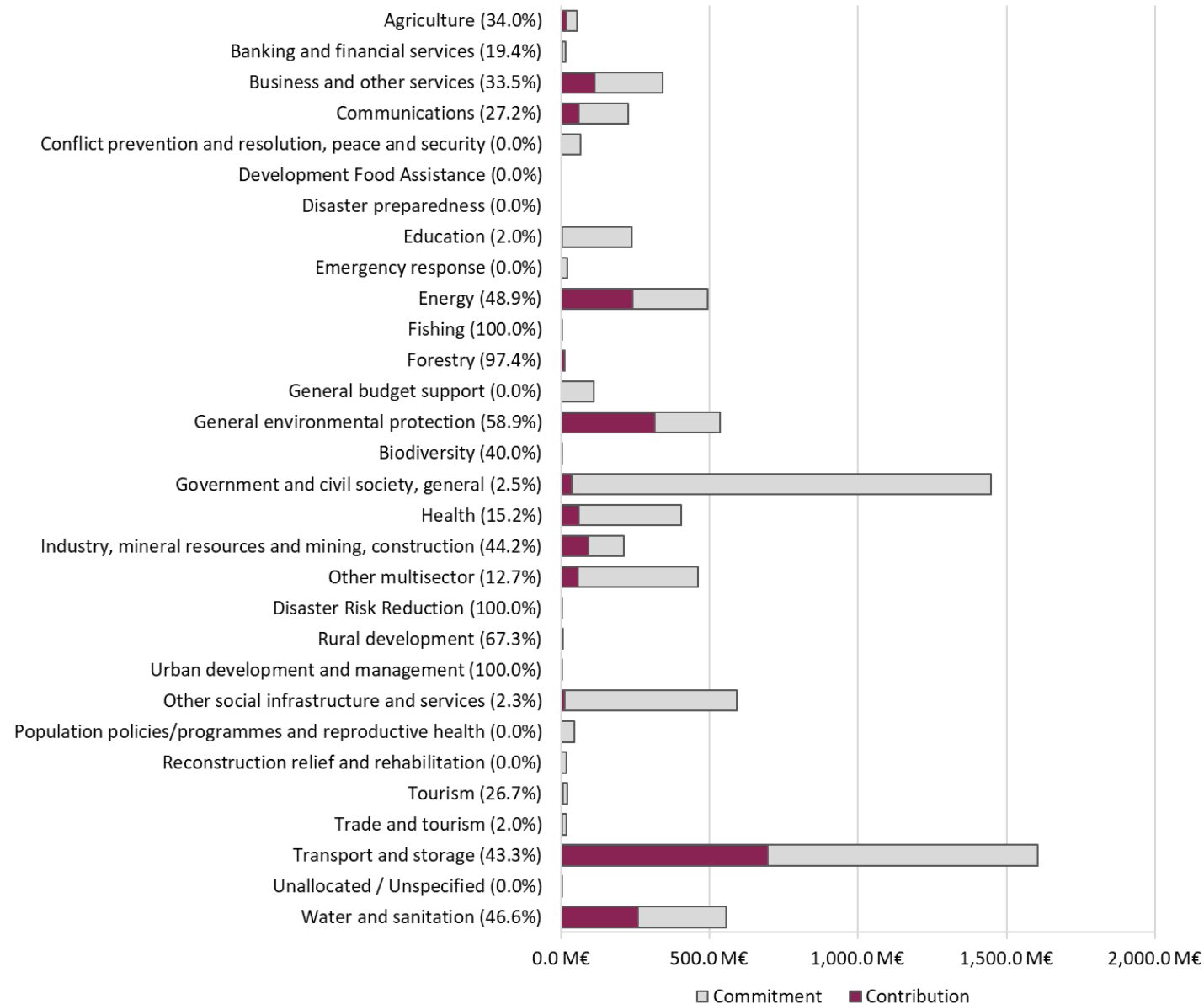
Health – Agriculture



Contribution to the marker in the relation to the commitment per sector



CC contributions 2021-2024 – by Sectors



**NEAR-managed
IPA III**



Transport



Contribution to the marker in the relation to the commitment per sector

Progress to date – Biodiversity contribution

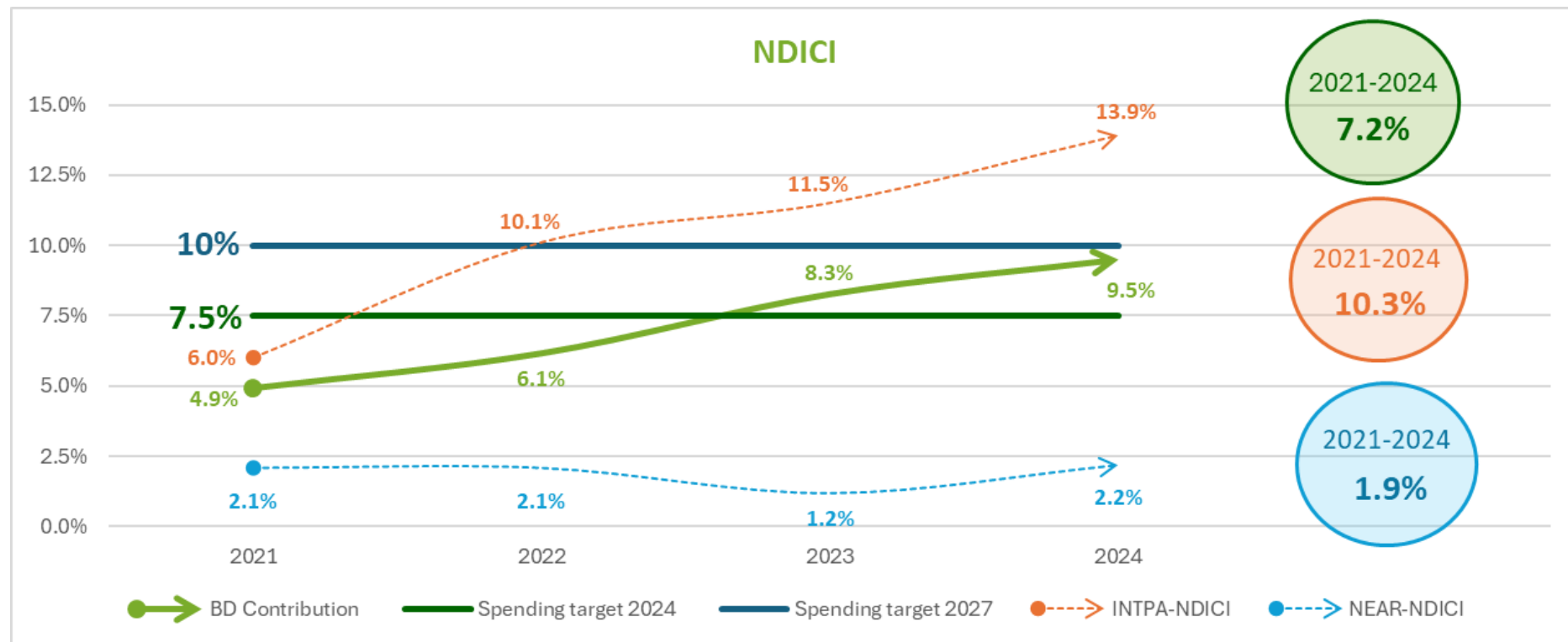


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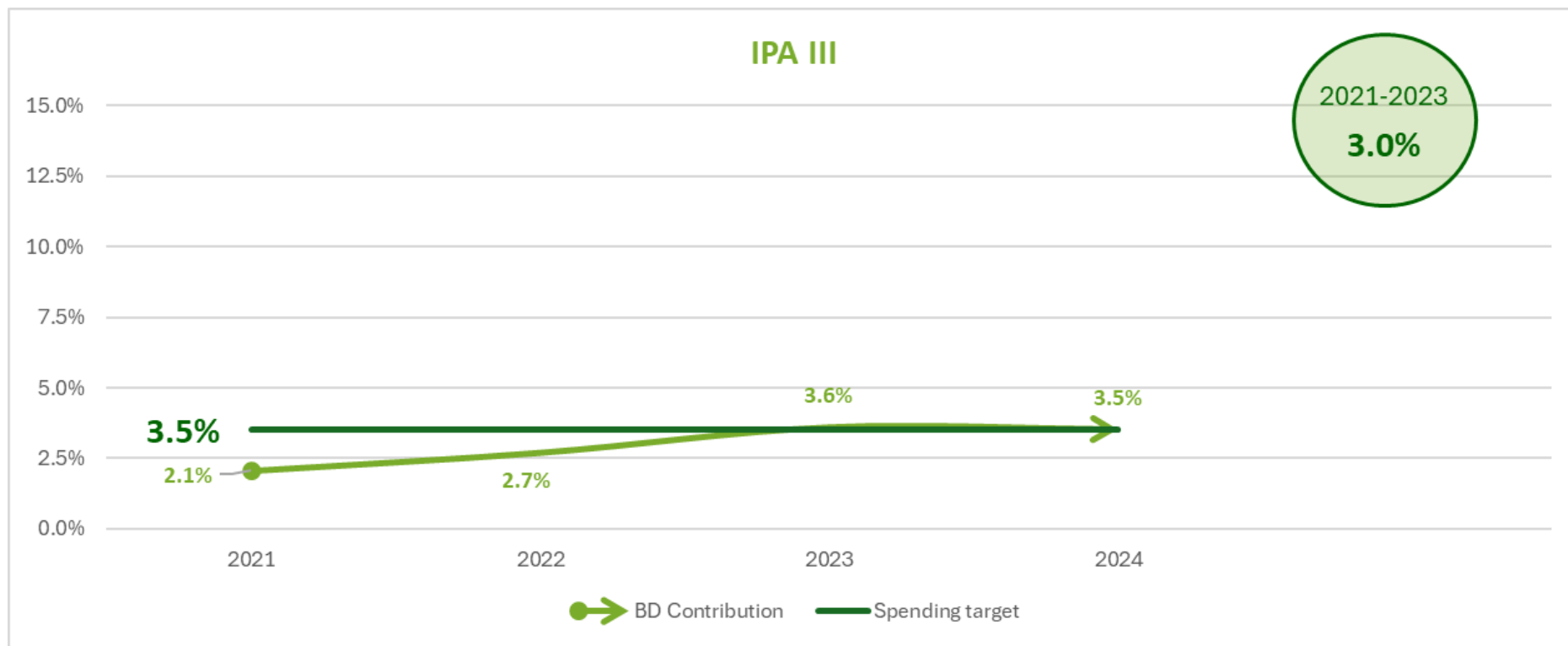


European
Commission

BD Contributions 2021-2024 vs targets

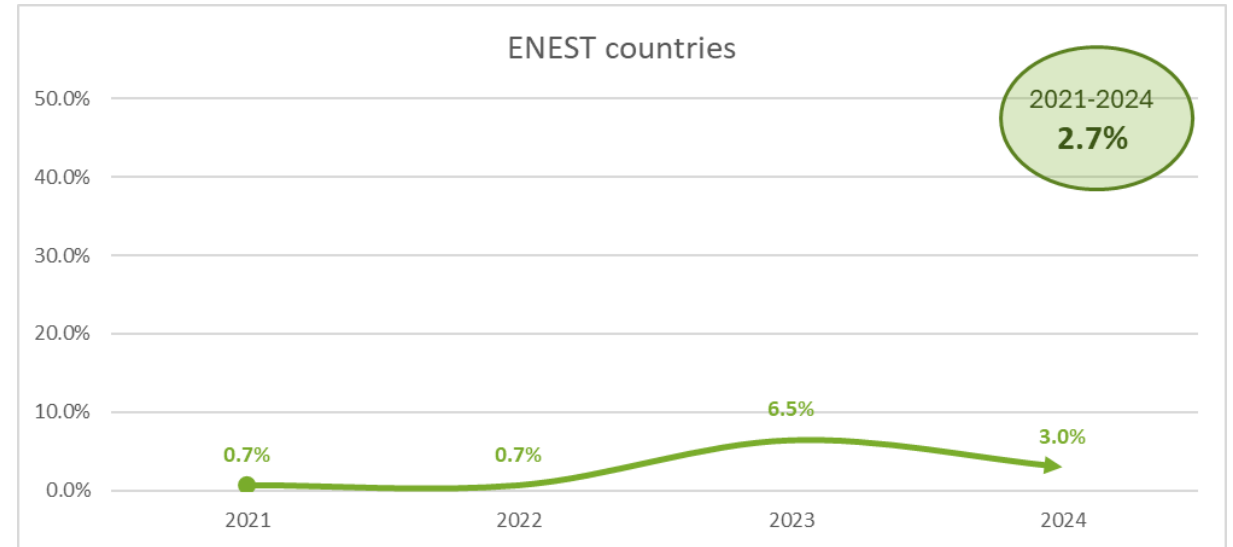
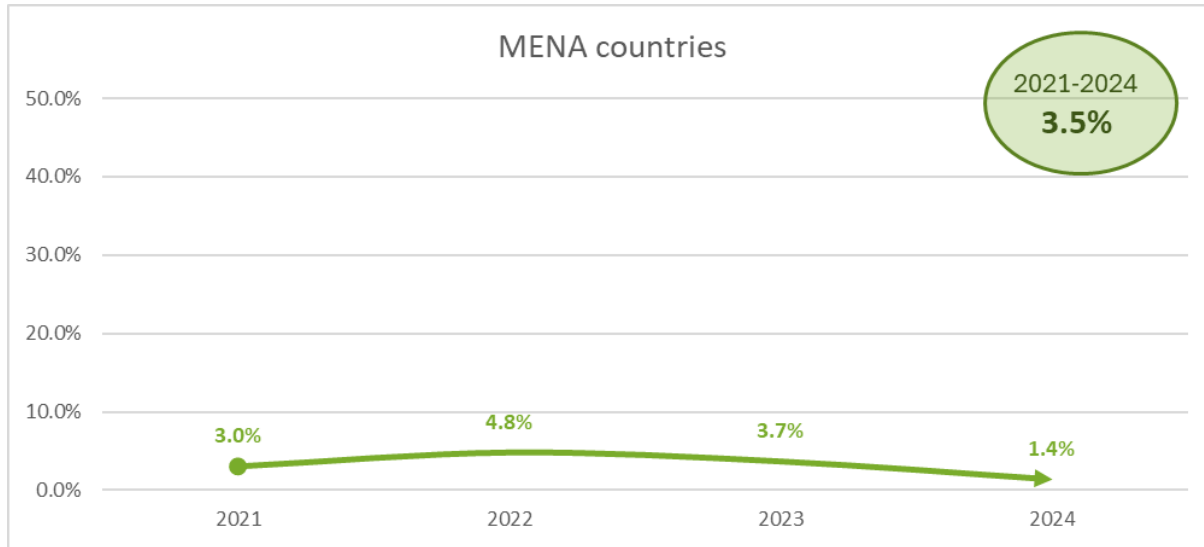


BD contributions 2021-2024 vs benchmark



BD contributions 2021-2024 (provisional)

MENA & ENEST countries



MENA countries

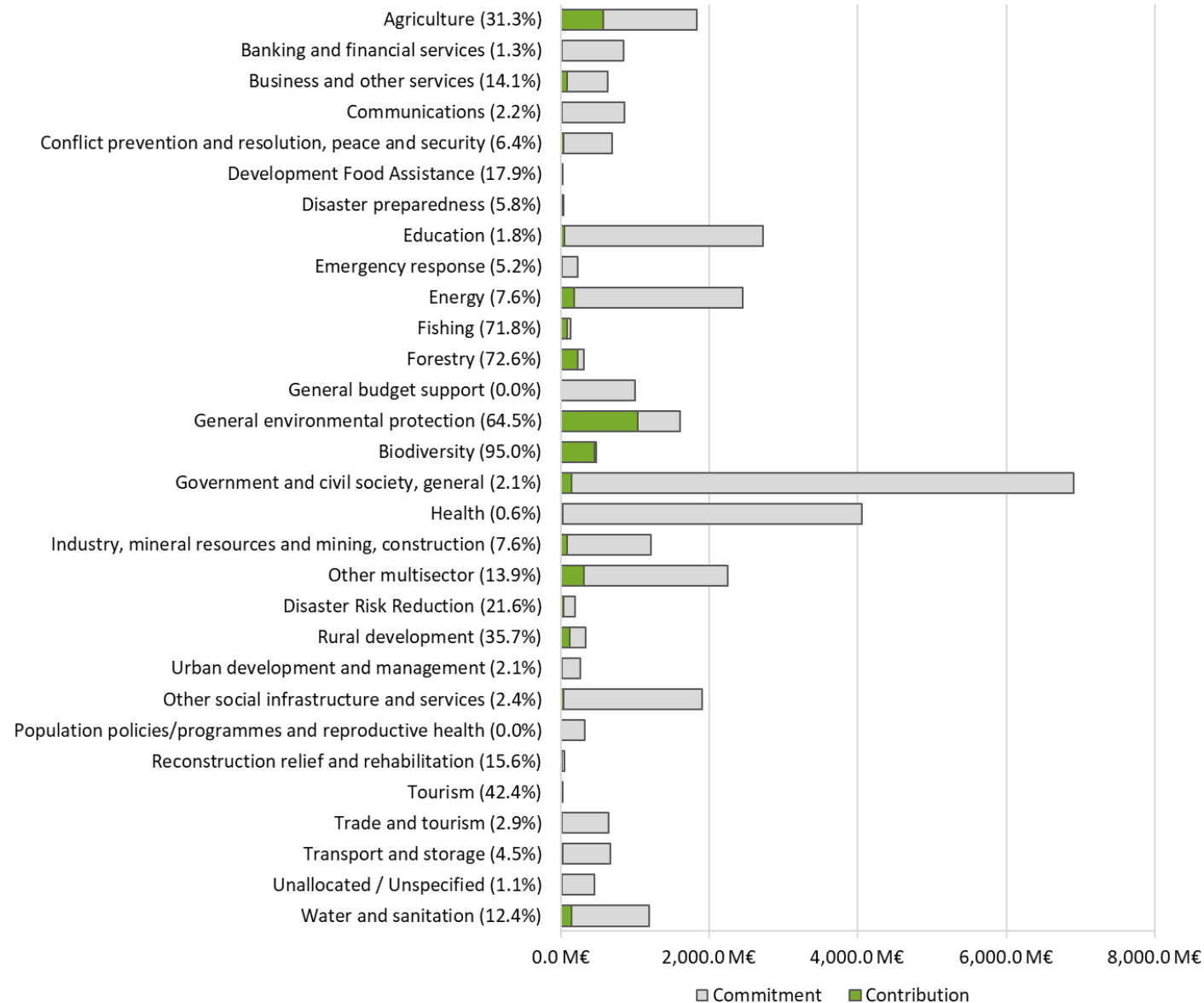
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- regional actions encoded as unspecified developing countries are not included

ENEST countries

- **NDICI actions**, all DGs
- filtered by regions (WB & Türkiye, ENP East, Regional Europe)
- regional actions encoded as unspecified developing countries are not included



BD contributions 2021-2024 – by Sectors



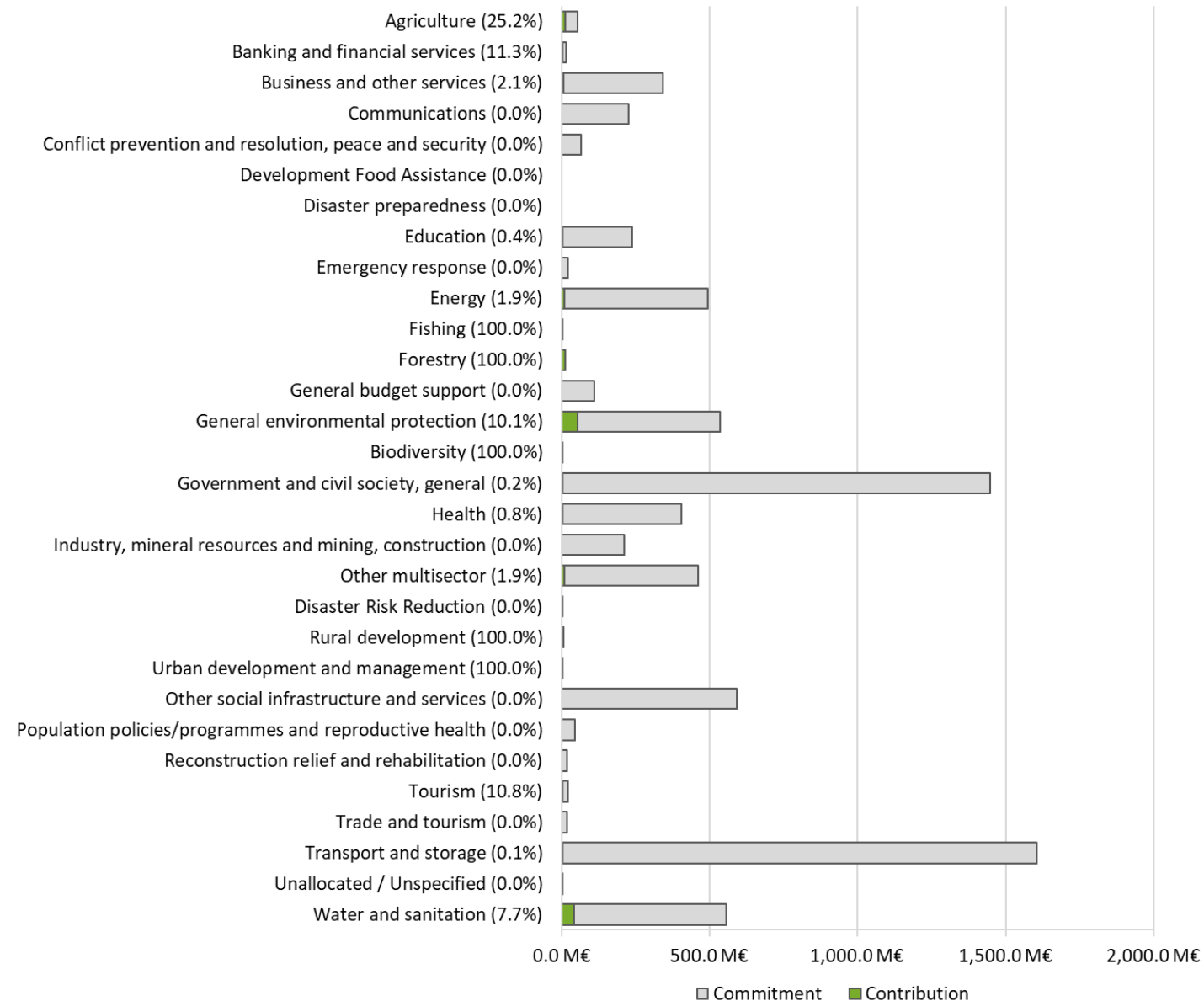
**INTPA + NEAR-
managed NDICI**



Contribution to the marker in the relation to the commitment per sector



BD contributions 2021-2024 – by Sectors

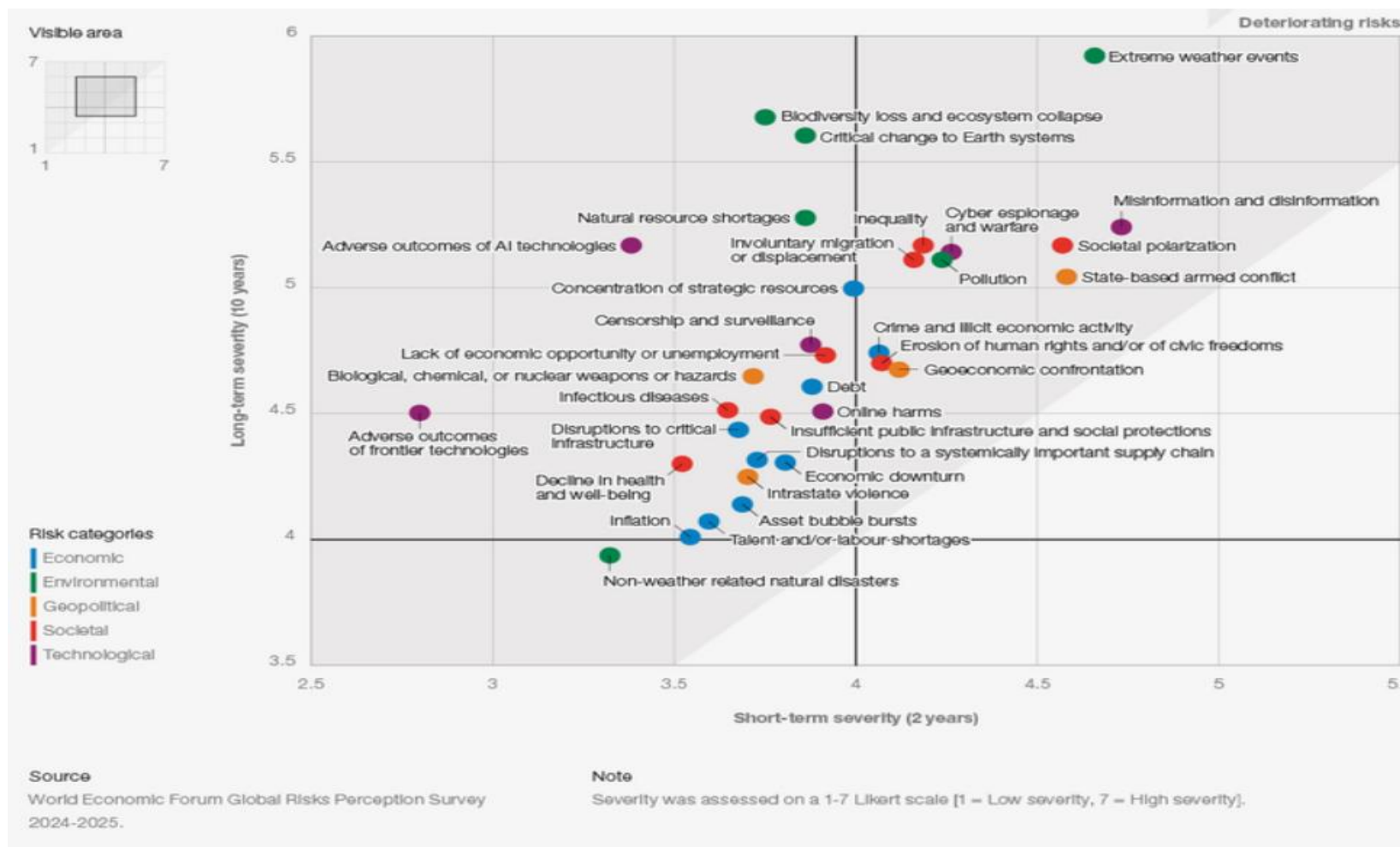


**NEAR-managed
IPA III**



Contribution to the marker in the relation to the commitment per sector

World Economic Forum – Global Risks Report 2025



Always see things from a green perspective

The Green Lens Approach



Positive agenda

Seek opportunities
to **contribute to environment**
and **climate objectives** and **targets**



Do no harm

Avoid and **minimise impacts**
on the environment and climate



Environment & Climate Risk Management

Address risks from
environmental degradation
and **climate change**
to the action



Rio markers

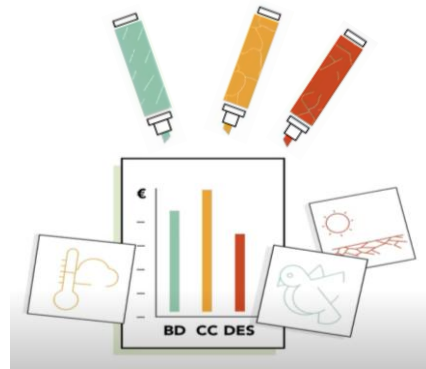


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What are Rio markers?

Created by the OECD DAC to keep track of development aid to implementation of the Rio Conventions (on biodiversity, combating desertification and climate change)



DCD/DAC(2024)40/ADD2/FINAL

Unclassified

English text only

20 January 2025

DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

Cancels & replaces the same document of 4 September 2024

Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) and the Annual DAC Questionnaire

Annexes – modules D and E



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Possible scores

“Principal” objective (RM2)

(Rio) objective is **fundamental** to the design/ motivation of the action, i.e. *one of the principal reasons for undertaking the action*

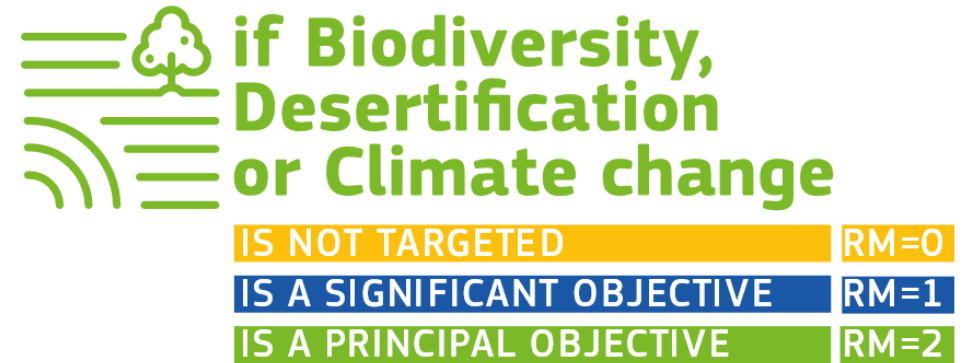
**Note: there can be more than one Principal Objective for an action*

”Significant” objective (RM1)

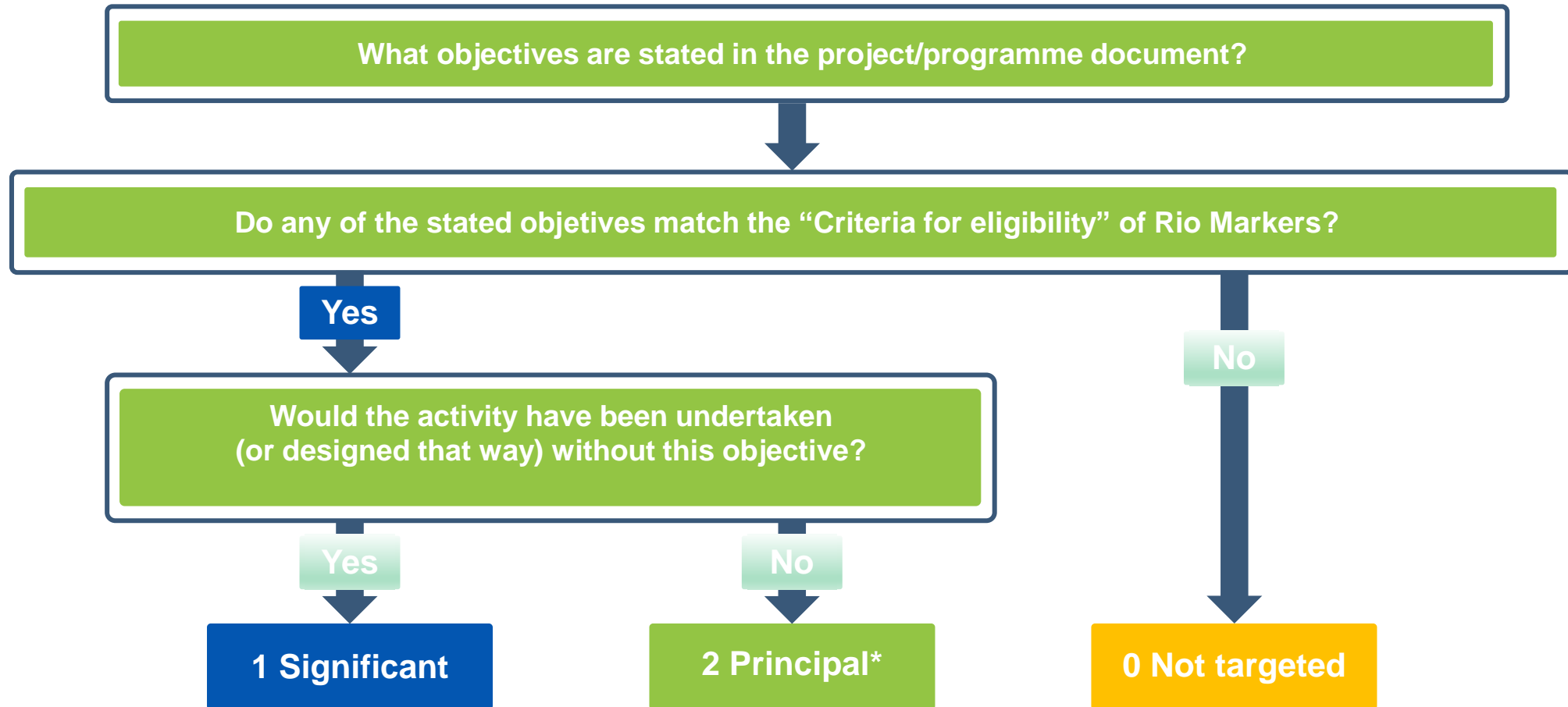
Rio theme is not the main motivation, but the action helps meet environmental/Rio concerns. Still, the (Rio) objective must be explicitly stated

Not targeted (RM0)

Avoiding adverse impact does not justify a marker



Decision tree for scoring an activity



What is required to secure a Rio marker?

“To facilitate transparency and in light of public scrutiny of the Rio marker data, it is important that (...) the **relation between the activity and the objective** (e.g. climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, other) is **clearly communicated and made explicit**”

OECD DAC guidance



Translating marker scores into financial contributions



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At what level are contributions measured?

Contributions are measured at the level of commitments for purposes of reporting to the OECD DAC



Level 1: Commitments

Level 2: Contracts

Level 3: Payments



by EC convention

 **if Biodiversity,
Desertification
or Climate change**

IS NOT TARGETED

RM=0 0% BUDGET

IS A SIGNIFICANT OBJECTIVE

RM=1 40% BUDGET

IS A PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE

RM=2 100% BUDGET



Other considerations

- The Rio markers are not mutually exclusive
- General Budget Support (A01) and Development Awareness (H01) actions cannot be Rio marked
- GBS (A01) contributions are reported internally based on the targeted SDGs (principal SDG = 100%; significant SDG = 40%)
- Administrative expenditure transactions are excluded
- Transition to DG BUDG coefficients as of next MFF – to coexist with Rio markers



Rio markings and investments



- For purposes of calculating EU contributions, marker scores of corresponding Action Documents (i.e. contributions to investment facilities, EFSD+ CPF provisioning) are used
- The lead FI does its own scoring at the project level, normally using a more granular approach
- Adjustments to EFSD+ provisioning done based on granular assessment (completed for ENEST/MENA, pending for INTPA and UIF)



Quality Control entry points

- **Continual checks** - Greening Facility validates markers as part of action design, also pre-TAM in case of investments
- Control of claims to contributions made in MIPs, AAPs and Action Documents
- **Annual quality review** based on R2 extraction



Guidance and support



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Quick Tips for the integration of environment and climate change (by sector)

Include an annex on indicative activities that qualify for a marker in different sectors

Currently available for:

- Agriculture & Food Systems
- Digitalisation
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Education
- Energy
- Health
- Migration
- Peace and security (upcoming)
- Private sector development / Trade
- Social protection
- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Transport & Mobility
- Urban development
- Water Resources Management
- Water & Sanitation



Greening Toolbox resources

European Commission > ... > IV. Annexes

Annex 2. Aid to environment, DRR and Rio markers

> Intervention Cycle Methodology Guide

✓ Greening EU Cooperation Toolbox

- Acronyms and abbreviations

- > I. Introduction

- > II. Greening in practice

- > III. Guidance and support

- ✓ IV. Annexes

- Annex 1. Greening EU cooperation tools

- **Annex 2. Aid to environment, DRR and Rio markers**

- Annex 3. Model terms of reference for a Country Environmental Profile

Annex 2. Aid to environment, DRR and Rio markers

All action documents need to indicate if they target certain themes, which are reflected in policy makers, Rio markers and internal markers aiming at identifying and tracking financial contributions to specific themes.

This annex is concerned with the **aid to environment and the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policy markers**, as well as with the **four Rio markers (biodiversity, combating desertification, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation)**.

These markers are defined by the OECD DAC, which has developed [guidelines for their application](#), including eligibility criteria. The Commission strives to strictly follow the DAC methodology. The relevant directives and guidance can be found [here](#).

Possible marker scores

Each marker can have one of three possible values:

- Principal objective (marker score 2)
- Significant objective (marker score 1)
- Not targeted (marker score 0)

An objective (e.g. climate change mitigation, biodiversity) is considered '**principal**' when it is explicitly stated as fundamental in the design of, or the motivation for, the action. Promoting the objective will thus be stated in the documentation to be one of the principal reasons for undertaking the action. In other words, the action would

What are Rio markers and how to apply them

Tutorial video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek82kgQ_aPM



Definitions and eligibility criteria



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Definition climate change mitigation

The activity contributes to the objective of **stabilisation of 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 to enhance GHG removal by sinks, in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Eligibility criteria climate change mitigation

The activity contributes to:

- Mitigation of climate change by limiting anthropogenic emissions of GHGs, including gases regulated by the Montreal Protocol; **or**
- Protection and/or enhancement of GHG sinks and reservoirs; **or**
- 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 Convention.



Definition climate change adaptation

The activity 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 the 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 implementation of climate change adaptation actions.



Eligibility criteria CC adaptation

- The climate change adaptation objective is explicitly indicated in the activity documentation; **and**
- The activity contains specific measures targeting the definition above.
- Carrying out an assessment of vulnerability to climate variability and change, either separately or as an integral part of the agencies' standard procedures, facilitates this approach.



Best practice CC adaptation

Set of **Best practice**: a three-step approach:

1. Set out the **context** of risks, vulnerabilities and impacts related to climate variability and climate change, using a robust evidence base (existing analyses and reports, CVA analysis, or other);
2. State the **intent** to address the identified risks, vulnerabilities and impacts in project documentation (how to address the above);
3. Demonstrate a clear and direct link between the identified risks, vulnerabilities and impacts and the specific project **activities**.



Biological diversity definition

- The activity promotes at least one of the three objectives of the Convention:
 - the conservation of biodiversity,
 - sustainable use of its components (ecosystems, species or genetic resources),
 - or fair and equitable benefit-sharing of the utilisation of genetic resources.

A vibrant underwater photograph showing a large school of fish swimming over a colorful coral reef. The fish are mostly silver and yellow, with some darker species. The coral is in various shades of red, orange, and white. The water is clear blue. A decorative blue vertical bar with a yellow dotted pattern is on the left side of the slide.

Biological diversity eligibility criteria (extracts)

The activity contributes to:

- Conservation or enhancement of ecosystems, species or genetic resources...their use/restoration...
- Integration of biodiversity...within recipient countries' development objectives, economic and sectoral regulations, planning and decision-making processes...
- Elimination, phasing out or reform of incentives...harmful to biodiversity...
- Maintenance, sustainable management and restoration of genetic diversity...
- Developing countries' efforts to meet CBD obligations...
- Implement NbS...



Combating desertification definition

The activity 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.



Combating desertification eligibility criteria

The activity contributes to:

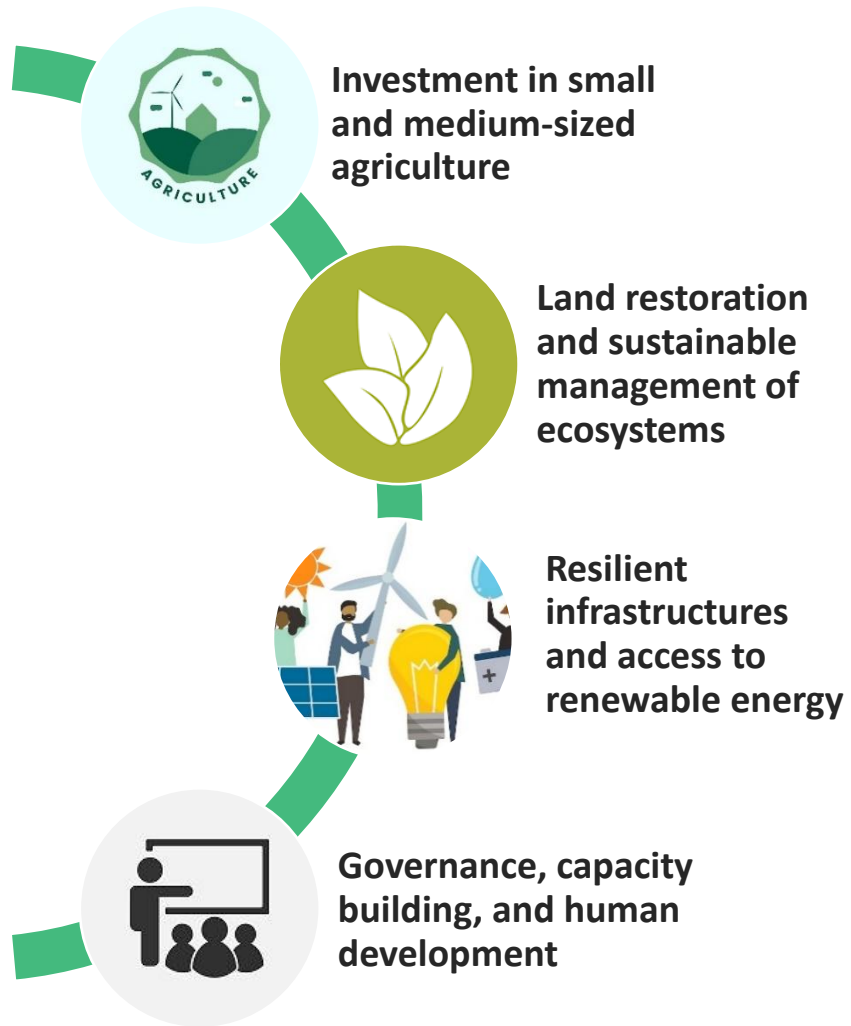
- **Protecting or enhancing** dryland ecosystems or **remedying** existing environmental damage; **or**
- **Integration of desertification concerns** with recipient countries' development objectives through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research; **or**
- **Developing countries' efforts** to meet their obligations under the Convention.

Claiming a ‘principal objective’ (RM2)

- The Rio theme should be a **starting point** when identifying an Action, and one of the principal reasons for designing it!
- Indirect benefits or partial contributions are insufficient to justify a RM2 (e.g. the Action would not have been funded - or designed that way - without the cc/bd/d objective)
- The Rio markers are **applied to the whole of the action**. If only one component addresses Rio theme-relevant activities, it is usually not enough to secure a RM2.
- **Countries’ relevant documents** (i.e. NDCs, NAPs, NBSAP, etc.) are important to support a RM2. *Does the action offer opportunities to contribute to their implementation?* If so, design the Action accordingly.
- If you truly mean to target climate as a ‘principal objective’...
 - **BE EXPLICIT ABOUT IT!**
 - an outside reader should clearly **understand what the climate/biodiversity/desertification context is, the challenges faced and how the action will help address them!**
 - **include relevant INDICATORS** in the logical framework! Example: if CC mitigation is a principal objective, make sure to include the GEF indicator ‘GHG emissions avoided (tonnes CO₂eq) with EU support’ in the logframe.
- **Synergies** between CC mitigation and/or CC adaptation with biodiversity offer many opportunities to secure contributions! Example: **nature-based solutions that tackle climate change and support biodiversity at the same time** (i.e. protecting mangroves, coastal protection, etc.)



Examples of potential climate/bd RM2 actions



- *Climate-smart agriculture*
- *Agro-ecology and agroforestry*
- *Deforestation-free products exports*
- *Transition to sustainable food systems*
- *Integrated water and natural resources management*
- *Support to landscape management practices*
- *Sustainable livestock management*
- *Public transport with an objective to reduce GHG emissions (subway, light rail, Bus Rapid Transit, trams, etc.)*
- *Nature-based solutions (e.g. for sea defences, flood control,...)*
- *Renewable rural energy*
- *Clean cooking solutions*
- *Flood and drought prevention*
- *Green social protection and safety net schemes*
- *TVET and climate in school's curricula, research and post-graduate studies earmarked for CC/BD subjects*
- *Climate resilience and natural resources management of Displacement Affected Communities (e.g. addressing root causes of conflict and migration)*
- *Climate change preparedness of the health sector*



Some particular cases to be mindful of – road construction



The mitigation marker can be applied if *activities dedicated to low/zero GHGs emissions transport modalities are promoted* (i.e., public transport lines, bike lanes and related infrastructure).



Some particular cases to be mindful of – hydropower



In hydropower (e.g. storage/dams or non-storage/run of the river), the mitigation marker *only if net GHG emission reductions can be demonstrated.*



Some particular cases to be mindful of – transmission lines



In transmission lines, the scoring depends on the *source of energy that will be distributed*, such as when *network expansion* or *modernisation* allows for the extension or connection of *clean* or *renewable energy*.



Some particular cases to be mindful of – agriculture



In agriculture, the scoring depends on the adoption of *climate-smart* and/or *sustainable agricultural practices* (i.e., agroecology, improving nitrogen fertiliser use, managing livestock manure efficiently).



Some particular cases to be mindful of – digital



Digitalisation relies on electricity and Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE), thus may contribute to GHG emission. Scoring depends on significant energy savings, clean energy production, and efficient e-waste management (i.e. green data centers, digital for mobility solutions, circular economy for e-waste).



Some particular cases to be mindful of – CRM



Some particular cases to be mindful of – railway transport



I would like more training...

- Check out [EU learn](#): Greening EU cooperation, 3 day training in Brussels (02-04 September 2025)
- Under development: regional training in Laos (20-23 October 2025)
- Do you have a request? Give us a shout!
- Previous recordings and webinars available [here](#)



WEBINAR SERIES

A TOOLBOX TO DELIVER ON OUR ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE OBJECTIVES UNDER GLOBAL GATEWAY

May 21

Introduction to
the Greening Toolbox

June 4

Setting targets
and Rio markers

June 11

Greening Global
Gateway investments

June 18

Environment & climate
risk screening and
greening tools

June 25

Greening budget
support and public
finance management

🕒 From 11:00
to 12:00 CET

🔗 Register to
join online

