



Greening EU Cooperation

Session 12: Rio markers

Rio markers



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What are Rio markers and how to apply them

Tutorial video



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)



Guidance on scoring Policy and Rio markers

OECD DAC Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for CRS and the Annual DAC Questionnaire. Annexes – modules D and E.

[DCD/DAC/STAT\(2024\)40/ADD2/FINAL](#)

- Annex 19: Policy markers
(Aid to Environment and DRR)
- Annex 20: Rio markers



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)

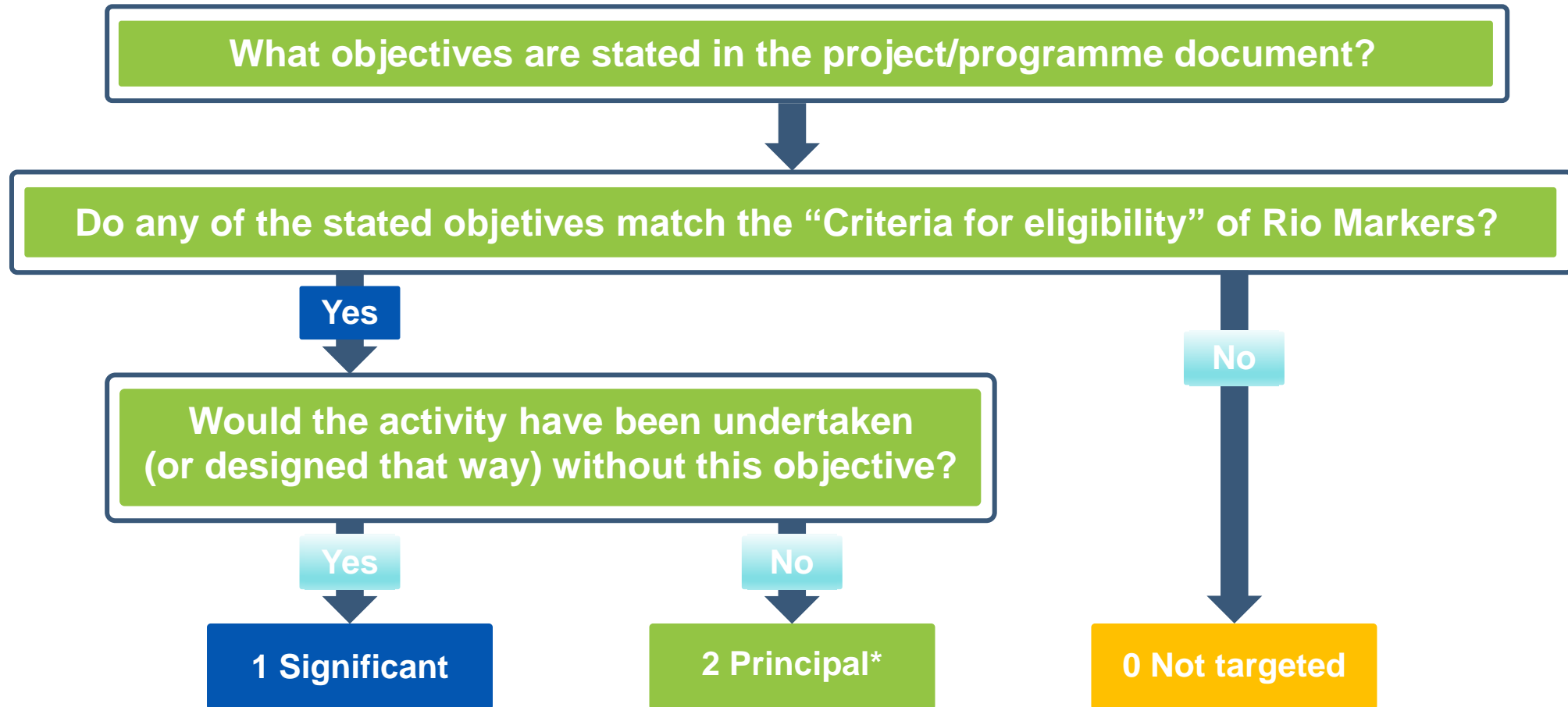
Rio theme is not the main motivation, but the action helps meet environmental/Rio concerns. Still, the (Rio) objective must be explicitly stated

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 EU 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



Avoiding double counting

- Contributions to CC mitigation and adaptation reported separately
- Only the highest score considered for purposes of calculating contributions to 'climate action'
- If an action contributes to both in equal measure, a 'cross-cutting' category may be used



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



Use of Rio markers for investments



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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 of markers and reporting



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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

Resources on Rio markings

Further guidance and resources

The document [Scoring of the Rio markers and the policy markers for Aid to Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction – Compilation of guidance material](#) provides hyperlinks to all the relevant sources and guidance material.

The [Tutorial video on Rio markers](#) provides the basics of Rio markers and how to score them, as well as a reminder of the biodiversity and climate spending targets.



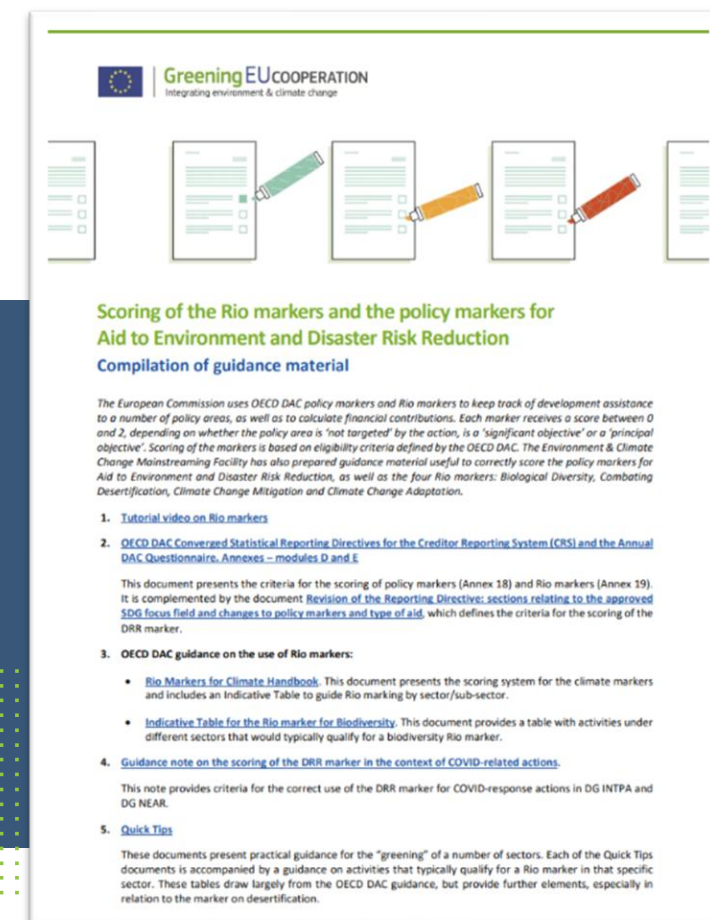
The [OECD DAC Converged Statistical Reporting Directives for the Creditor Reporting System \(CRS\) and the Annual DAC Questionnaire; Annexes – modules D and E](#) presents the definitions and eligibility criteria for policy and Rio markers. Annex 20 of the above document includes indicative tables of activities by sector that can qualify for the climate and biodiversity markers. Indicative tables for the Desertification marker are under preparation.

The [Quick Tips](#) is a series that presents practical guidance for the greening of a number of sectors. Each of the Quick Tips document related to a sector is accompanied by an Annex that presents guidance on activities that typically qualify for a Rio marker in that specific sector. These tables draw largely from the OECD DAC indicative tables, but provide additional elements, especially in relation to the marker on combating desertification.

If you have any questions on the correct scoring of the markers, you can contact the **Greening Facility**:

✉ INTPA-GREENING-FACILITY@ec.europa.eu

✉ NEAR-GREENING-FACILITY@europa.eu



Definitions and eligibility criteria



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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!
- **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!
- **Synergies** between CCM and/or CCA with biodiversity and other important green transition objectives offer opportunities to secure contributions!



How to secure a Rio marker 2?

- The Rio theme is a **main motivation** for the action. 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)
- For adaptation, explaining the **vulnerability context** and how the action will help address it at the **Impact** and/or **Outcome levels**, with outputs and activities that respond to the identified vulnerabilities, is necessary.
- 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.
- Supporting **nature-based solutions** provides **multiple opportunities to tackle the impacts of climate change and support biodiversity**, contributing to green development pathways.
- If CC mitigation is a principal objective, make sure to include the **GERF indicator** 'GHG emissions avoided (tonnes CO_{2eq}) with EU support' in the logframe.





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.



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.



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

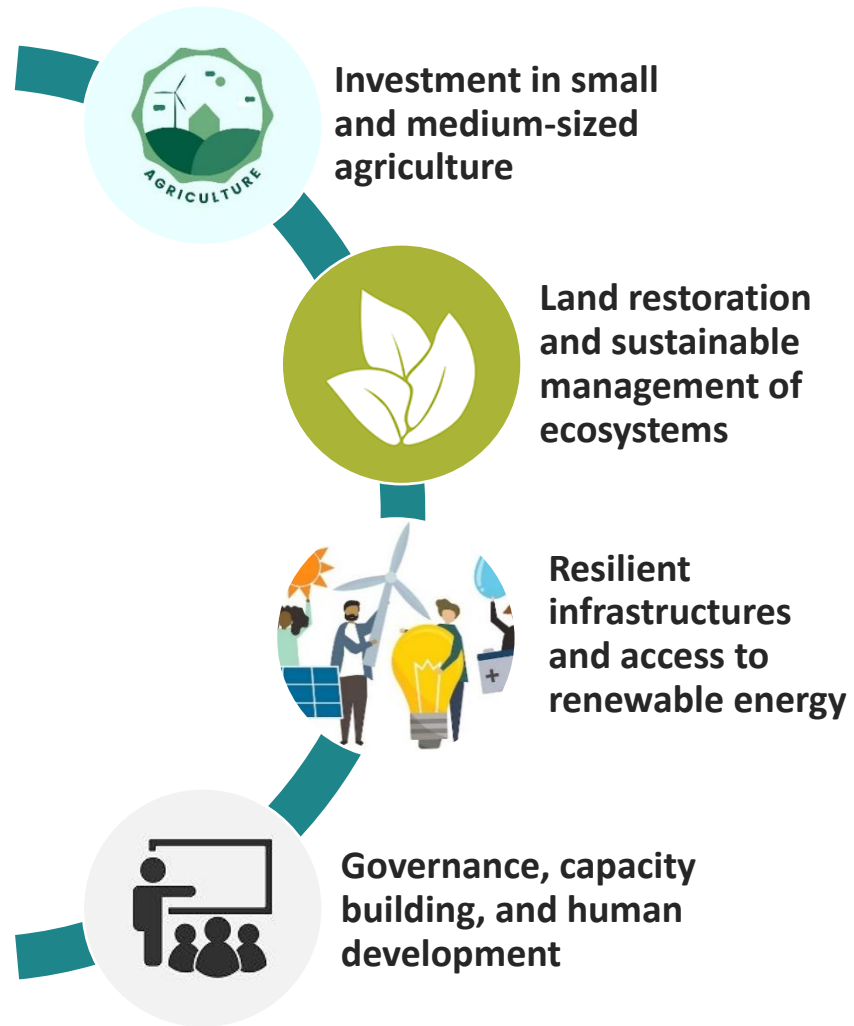
- The activity promotes at least one of the three objectives of the Convention:
 - the conservation of biodiversity,
 - sustainable use of its components (ecosystems, species or genetic resources),
 - or fair and equitable benefit-sharing of the utilisation of genetic resources.



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.

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



Some particular cases to be mindful of – hydropower



Some particular cases to be mindful of – transmission lines



Some particular cases to be mindful of – digital



Some particular cases to be mindful of – CRM



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