Project idea form - small projects

Version 2.1

Registration no. (filled in by MA/JS only) _____

Project Idea Form

Date of submission 02/06/2025

1. Project idea identification

Project idea name	BlueRural Water for the Municipality – Better Public Services and Local Resilience
Short name of the project	BlueRural
Previous calls	yes ◯ no ◉
Seed money support	yes ◯ no ◉

2. Programme priority

	2. Water-smart societies

3. Programme objective

	2.1. Sustainable waters

4. Potential lead applicant

Name of the organisation (original)	Urząd Gminy Stawiguda
Name of the organisation (English)	Municipality of Stawiguda
Website	stawiguda@stawiguda.pl
Country	PL

Type of Partner	Local public authority
	municipality, etc.
Contact person 1	
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Contact person 2	
Name	*(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)*
Email	*(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)*
Phone	*(max. 100 characters incl. spaces)*

Which organisation(s) in the planned partnership take part in a project within the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme for the first time? Please list the respective partners.

Municipality of Stawiguda
Municipality of Nidzica

5.1 Specific challenge to be adressed

Objective 1: Focused Testing and Cooperation on Scalable Water Retention Solutions
• Analyze water and environmental data, enhanced by international partner comparisons.
• Build a strong network among Baltic Sea region municipalities and expert partners.
• Pilot solutions like rain gardens and retention barrels in Stawiguda and Nidzica.
• Develop adaptive documentation reflecting pilot challenges and successes for broader application.
Objective 2: Hands-on Competency Building and Resilience Development
2.1 – Pilot Installation of Nature-based Solutions:
• Implement rain gardens, wooden rainwater barrels, and other retention methods at public sites.
• Improve water retention to increase resilience against drought and floods.
2.2 – Training for Local Government and Partner Staff:
• Conduct capacity-building workshops promoting ecological and functional water management.
• Share partner expertise to support replication and integration into local planning.
Objective 3: Strengthening Networks and Sharing Knowledge for Sustainable Impact
3.1 – Organize partner visits, workshops, and study tours for cross-border experience exchange. These exchanges serve as structured peer-assessment checkpoints, where partners evaluate pilot progress,

share technical feedback, and co-develop improvements to ensure each solution is tested against real-world, cross-border learning.
3.2 – Develop a pilot-driven resource package featuring detailed documentation, cost models, and practical implementation frameworks, specifically designed for flexible adaptation by rural municipalities in the Baltic Sea region.
Objective 4: Building Long-term Sustainability through Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration
• Develop cooperation frameworks among residents, authorities, and education sectors.
• Promote ecological awareness and social engagement based on international lessons.
• Plan follow-up actions to expand to LIFE and Horizon levels.
Limited resources and knowledge hinder implementation of nature-based retention systems, affecting public space quality and increasing costs.
Challenges include:
• Lack of technical capacity and funding for advanced water solutions
• Limited experience with green-blue infrastructure
• Reduced community engagement and adaptive resilience
BlueRural addresses these by:
• Leveraging proven expertise and existing networks
• Piloting solutions with partner site visits and joint reflection
• Developing practical, adaptive

5.2 Focus of the call

BlueRural addresses climate-related water management challenges in small rural municipalities by promoting low-cost, nature-based solutions tailored and tested locally. Key goals include:
Developing scalable pilot projects that enhance climate resilience in public spaces

Implementing rainwater retention systems supported by partner visits and reflections

Delivering capacity-building through hands-on training and international expertise

Engaging communities and educational institutions collaboratively

Strengthening international networks and producing an adaptable toolkit for replication

The approach combines pilot implementation, partner exchange, and participatory methods, following a clear process from assessment through piloting to evaluation and networking.

6. Transnational relevance

Partners from diverse Baltic Sea countries conduct site visits before and after piloting rainwater retention in public buildings like schools and municipal offices. These visits allow direct assessment of installation, operation, and maintenance challenges.

Pilot systems—such as rain barrels with irrigation and educational signage—are adapted to local conditions using native plants and optimized tank sizes. Partners jointly produce detailed pilot reports

through structured peer assessments, documenting not only technical aspects but also mutual reviews of successes, delays, and lessons. These peer-reviewed insights form the backbone of a living, adaptable toolkit for broader replication.

Hands-on training and live demonstrations for municipal staff emphasize simple, low-cost, visually appealing retention solutions for rapid adoption. All materials, cost breakdowns, and technical guides are compiled into a user-friendly toolkit.

Communities and schools actively participate in monitoring, maintaining green infrastructure, and co-creating educational content, fostering ownership and knowledge transfer. This strengthens networks and builds capacity.

7. Specific aims to be adressed

Building trust that could lead to further cooperation initiatives
For Stawiguda and Nidzica: Co-developing effective nature-based water retention solutions tailored to each locality's needs. Building practical experience and skills within local teams to ensure sustainable operation and easy replication of pilot projects. Documenting challenges, successes, and lessons learned to guide future initiatives and capacity building. For international partners (e.g., Finland, Germany): Using pilot sites as real-life testbeds to adapt and refine water retention models for diverse climates and communities. Facilitating hands-on experience exchange and data sharing to improve partner programs and support transnational knowledge transfer. For the Baltic Sea Region: Strengthening cross-border cooperation by integrating municipal and institutional networks focused on green infrastructure. Creating a practical, region-wide knowledge base and standardized toolkits based on pilot outcomes, enabling effective replication and scaling across rural municipalities.
Initiating and keeping networks that are important for the BSR
For Stawiguda and Nidzica: Co-developing nature-based water retention solutions tailored to each municipality's environmental and social contexts. Building hands-on expertise through pilots to ensure sustainable management and easy replication. Producing detailed documentation to guide future projects and capacity building. For international partners (e.g., Finland, Germany): Using pilot sites as testbeds to adapt water retention models to varied climates and communities. Enabling experience exchange, collaborative data analysis, and refinement to improve partner initiatives and foster transnational knowledge flow. For the Baltic Sea Region: Enhancing cross-border cooperation by linking municipal and institutional actors into a network focused on green infrastructure. Developing a regionally relevant knowledge base and standardized toolkits from pilot results to support replication and scaling in rural municipalities.

Bringing the Programme closer to the citizens
For Stawiguda and Nidzica: Piloting nature-based water retention in rural areas. Building local capacity via training, workshops, and exchanges to enhance skills in green-blue infrastructure. Documenting performance and challenges to refine scalable, climate-resilient models for the Baltic Sea Region. Creating hubs to boost visibility and access to larger projects like LIFE and Horizon. For international partners: Using pilot results to adapt and scale solutions across climates. Offering data, tools, and knowledge-sharing through workshops and study visits to support replication and expertise. For the Baltic Sea Region: Strengthening cooperation by linking municipal and institutional networks for climate adaptation. Developing shared knowledge and standardized toolkits from pilots to improve resilience. Encouraging collaboration to build capacity and align water management across borders.
Allowing a swift response to unpredictable and urgent challenges
For Stawiguda and Nidzica: Enhancing local resilience by upgrading infrastructure and community preparedness to withstand climate change impacts and extreme weather events. Implementing innovative, tested adaptation tools and real-time crisis management systems to improve response efficiency and reduce risks. For international partners: Piloting and refining nature-based and technical solutions under varied environmental conditions to boost adaptability and robustness. Sharing best practices and data on climate risk management to strengthen partner capacities and joint emergency planning. For the Baltic Sea Region: Elevating regional safety standards by establishing coordinated, rapid-response protocols and communication networks. Fostering deeper cross-border collaboration for integrated crisis management and resource sharing during environmental emergencies.

8. Target groups

Public and local government employees (Poland, Germany, Finland): Municipal officials in charge of infrastructure, environment, and spatial planning will engage in hands-on training and workshops focused on implementing green-blue infrastructure and water retention technologies. This strengthens their technical skills and improves local governments' ability to manage climate risks effectively. Local community members and youth: Residents, students, local activists, and community leaders in pilot areas will actively participate in living labs, maintenance of rain gardens, rainfall monitoring, and educational workshops. These activities foster environmental stewardship, enhance local identity, and build grassroots support for

sustainable water management.

Scientific and educational institutions (Poland, Finland, Germany):
Universities, research bodies, and innovation centers provide technical expertise by developing practical models, guidelines, and impact assessments. Their research supports municipalities in designing adaptive, scalable solutions tailored to rural and small-town contexts.

Transnational cooperation (Poland, Germany, Finland):
A trilateral partnership leverages diverse regional experience in water management and climate adaptation. Partners co-develop adaptable solutions and share knowledge through regular meetings, joint workshops, and study visits, establishing a replicable framework for water retention and resilience across the Baltic Sea Region.

	Please use the drop-down list to define up to five target groups that you will involve through your project's activities.	Please define a field of responsibility or an economic sector of the selected target group	Specify the countries and regions that the representatives of this target group come from.
1.	Local public authority	Climate-adaptive infrastructure and water management in rural and semi-rural areas.	Poland, Germany, Finland, Denmark (Baltic Sea Region).
2.	Interest group	Environmental education, community engagement, and local stewardship in sustainable water management.	Poland, Germany, Finland (pilot areas in the Baltic Sea Region).
3.	Higher education and research institution	Applied research, innovation, and development of nature-based water management solutions.	Poland, Germany, Finland (Baltic Sea Region).
4.	Infrastructure and public service provider	Implementation and maintenance of green-blue infrastructure and public water management services.	Poland, Germany, Finland, Denmark (Baltic Sea Region).

5.	NGO	Advocacy, awareness-raising, and community-based support for sustainable water and environmental practices.	Poland, Germany, Finland (Baltic Sea Region).

9. Contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Please indicate if your project idea has the potential to contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (https://eusbsr.eu/implementation/).

yes ◉ no ◯

Please select which policy area(s) of the EUSBSR your project idea contributes to most.

PA Nutri

PA Hazards

The MA/JS may share your project idea form with the respective policy area coordinator(s) of the EUSBSR. You can find contacts of PACs at the EUSBSR website (https://eusbsr.eu/contact-us/).

☐ If you disagree, please tick here.

10. Partnership

The project is coordinated by the Municipality of Stawiguda (Poland), leading transnational activities and managing local pilot implementations. The Municipality of Nidzica supports rural and semi-rural communities facing urgent climate-driven water management challenges.

Academic and expert partners include Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (Finland), specializing in maritime logistics and nature-based solutions, and the EUCC – The Coastal Union Germany e.V., which brings ecological and technical expertise on coastal and freshwater systems. Centrum Balticum (Finland) supports communication and policy outreach across the Baltic Sea Region.

Associated partners include the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), contributing scientific insight into sustainable environmental and water management, and Holbæk Municipality (Denmark), which brings experience in implementing adaptive solutions in varied socio-climatic contexts. Additional municipalities from Finland and Germany are expected to join, further broadening the transnational network.

Partners confront recurring floods that damage infrastructure and disrupt communities in rural and suburban areas—issues compounded by limited access to technology, materials, and expertise for efficient rainwater capture and reuse. Finnish municipalities, in particular, face persistent flooding that hampers both development and quality of life.

BlueRural addresses these challenges by promoting practical, nature-based water retention strategies that enhance resilience, reduce flood risks, and improve the use of rainwater. The project equips local authorities with the tools, training, and knowledge to upgrade infrastructure and adapt to growing climate pressures.

Ultimately, BlueRural improves the quality of life for residents by creating healthier green spaces and reducing the health and safety risks associated with flooding. It strengthens social cohesion, supports sustainable development, and builds community resilience across the Baltic Sea Region. This collaborative, cross-border effort represents a strategic investment in a safer, more climate-adaptive BSR future.

11. Workplan

Months 1–3: Project Launch and Initial Setup
Convene kick-off meeting; establish communication protocols and schedules.
Map local water resources, institutions, and stakeholders.
Exchange best practices and conduct preliminary water management analyses.
Develop training frameworks and confirm pilot sites in Stawiguda and Nidzica.
Initiate community engagement and establish educational collaborations.

Months 4–6: In-Depth Analysis and Participatory Planning
Conduct comprehensive assessments of local water systems and retention potential.
Co-create design plans for rain gardens, retention barrels, and solutions with residents, schools, and staff.
Launch living labs and awareness activities to foster community stewardship.

Months 7–12: Pilot Implementation and Hands-On Training
Install nature-based water retention systems at pilot locations.
Deliver capacity-building workshops for municipal officials and partners.
Engage youth and residents in ongoing pilot maintenance, monitoring, and data collection.
Continuously evaluate pilot functionality and gather feedback for adaptive management.
Year 1 (Months 1–12): Pilot in Stawiguda and Nidzica; document processes and community tools.

Months 13–15: Monitoring, Reflection, and Adaptive Documentation
Analyze pilot data and community experiences.
Refine solutions based on challenges and successes.
Develop adaptive implementation packages—technical guidance, cost frameworks, and lesson summaries—for practical replication.
Expand network collaboration and knowledge sharing.
Conduct structured peer evaluations with external partner visits for real-time feedback and

refinement.

Months 16–18: Transnational Knowledge Exchange and Network Strengthening
Facilitate peer-to-peer assessments during visits and study tours, focusing on pilot impact, replication readiness, and site adaptation.
Finalize and share adaptive solution packages tailored for rural Baltic Sea municipalities.
Broaden partnerships and reinforce cross-border cooperation.
Facilitate youth and community exchanges to sustain involvement.

Months 19–21: Community Empowerment and Long-Term Capacity Building
Promote pilot outcomes and environmental benefits locally and regionally.
Institutionalize cyclical training sessions and participatory workshops.
Ensure sustainable maintenance frameworks and monitoring protocols.

Months 22–24: Project Closure and Strategic Scaling
Prepare final report and accessible documentation packages.
Draft recommendations for continuation, scaling, and integration into future EU programs such as LIFE and Horizon Europe.
Maintain environmental awareness and community engagement through follow-up initiatives.
Host dissemination workshop highlighting results, lessons learned, and replication pathways.

12. Planned budget

ERDF budget (planned expenditure of partners from the EU)	EUR 500,000.00
Norwegian budget (planned expenditure of partners from Norway)	EUR 0.00
Total budget (including preparatory costs)	**EUR 500,000.00**

13. Project consultation

Please indicate if you wish to have a consultation (online meeting) with the MA/JS to discuss your project idea

yes ◉ no ◯

14. Questions to the MA/JS

Questions related to the content of the planned project	Could you please clarify the best practices for effectively engaging local community members and youth in the co-creation and maintenance of nature-based water retention solutions? Additionally, what are the recommended strategies for ensuring transnational partner collaboration and peer-review processes contribute meaningfully to adaptive pilot documentation? Finally, could you advise on prioritizing pilot activities and training modules to maximize institutional capacity-building and

	long-term replicability across diverse rural municipalities in the Baltic Sea Region?
Questions related to budgeting and expenditure	Could you please clarify the eligibility criteria for different types of costs within the project budget, particularly regarding staff costs, travel expenses, and pilot implementation expenditures? Additionally, how should costs be documented and accounted for to ensure compliance with Interreg BSR financial rules? Are there specific limits or guidelines on budget reallocations between partners or cost categories during the project lifetime? Finally, could you advise on best practices for reporting co-financing and in-kind contributions to ensure transparency and avoid audit issues?
Any other questions	Are there any common challenges or pitfalls in project implementation, reporting, or partnership management that we should be aware of? Could you provide guidance or examples on how to effectively handle unforeseen changes during the project, such as delays, partner replacements, or scope adjustments, while remaining compliant with Interreg BSR requirements? Additionally, are there recommendations for maximizing project visibility and stakeholder engagement to support successful delivery and future funding opportunities?

15. Additional information

BlueRural is a focused, stepwise two-year initiative designed to build institutional capacity and reinforce transnational networks, laying the groundwork for future large-scale investment projects under LIFE, Horizon Europe, or similar EU programmes. The project introduces low-cost, nature-based water retention solutions aimed at enhancing climate resilience, revitalizing public spaces, and improving the quality of life in small towns and rural municipalities across the Baltic Sea Region.

Strengthened institutional capacities and local competencies via targeted training and in-situ pilot implementations demonstrating replicable nature-based water solutions.

Established transnational knowledge networks that connect municipalities, research institutions, and practitioners for ongoing exchange and innovation. These networks formalize peer-to-peer evaluation frameworks, enabling partners to act as examiners for each other's pilots and contribute to continuous, evidence-based improvement.

Your account in BAMOS+

Please remember that to officially submit your application you need to access our electronic data exchange system BAMOS+. More information about the process of applying for your account in BAMOS+ you will find here:
https://interreg-baltic.eu/gateway/bamos-account