



Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture

Announcement no. 18/23/33

"Sustainable management and restoration of Ukrainian forests" Guideline

**to promote bilateral research co-operation and knowledge exchange for international
sustainable forest management
Call for applications**

From 16 October 2023

Ukraine has a total forest area of 9.7 million hectares, which corresponds to 17% of the country's land area. In addition to the economic value of the forestry sector, forests play an important role in maintaining ecological functions. Sustainable forest management, including protection and adaptation to climate change, is therefore a high priority in Ukraine.

In 2021, the Ukrainian government issued a presidential decree that envisaged significantly increasing the forest area in Ukraine by one million hectares within the next ten years. The presidential campaign "Green Country" was developed on the basis of this decree. In addition, a national forest inventory was initiated, the first results of which were to be presented in September 2023. The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine since February 2022 has not only severely impacted the Ukrainian government's plans, but has also hit the country's entire forestry sector hard. In total, around 2.9 million hectares of forest were affected by military activities at the beginning of 2023. Some of this is also unavailable for cultivation in the long term, as large areas remain contaminated with mines even after the occupation has ended. In addition to contamination from mines, military operations have led to a wide range of destruction, including the release of toxic substances and military waste, with the result that forest ecosystems and their biodiversity are under pressure and the use of the forests is restricted. As a result of shelling and mine explosions, timber stocks have been damaged by splintering and restrict the use of wood. Due to intensive military activities, the number of forest fire areas has also increased significantly. The forestry infrastructure has been largely destroyed in parts of the country and the insecurity and instability have also made it difficult to invest in forestry and hindered the implementation of sustainable forest management practices.

There is a great need for measures to restore forests and support the development of sustainable forest management. As part of its funding guideline for the promotion of bilateral research cooperation and knowledge exchange for international sustainable forest management, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) is calling for submissions for research projects and knowledge exchange programmes. The projects should use innovative ideas and solutions to help rebuild, maintain and sustainably strengthen forests and the forest economy in Ukraine.

1 Purpose of the grant

Through this call for funding, the BMEL is supporting bilateral cooperation, the transnational exchange of knowledge and the development of scientific networks between Germany and Ukraine for the reconstruction of sustainable forest management and the functional restoration and ecological security of Ukrainian forests.

The following thematic objectives are to be pursued within the framework of this funding announcement:

- Restoration of Ukrainian forest ecosystems and their ecosystem services such as soil protection, water regulation, carbon sequestration and biodiversity conservation,
- Forest health, forest reorganisation and strengthening the resilience of existing forests to climate change and biotic and abiotic damage,
- Support the restoration of forests and the expansion of forest area through resilient, climate-adapted forests,



- Integrated forest fire management with regard to areas contaminated with explosive ordnance,
- Research into solutions to combat illegal logging and trade,
- Improving the productivity of forest resources (wood and non-timber products) with a view to sustainable management,
- Research into solutions for socio-economic aspects of forestry, such as securing jobs and strengthening rural areas,
- Digitisation in the area of forest monitoring and management.

The relevant basis for this announcement is the Guideline for the Promotion of Bilateral Research Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange for International Sustainable Forest Management of 27 May 2021 (BANz AT 24.06.2021 B3); see also www.ble.de/finw.

2 Object of funding

2.1 Funding priority bilateral research collaborations

The aim of funding bilateral research projects is to address forestry issues relating to one or more of the thematic objectives described in point 1. To this end, research collaborations between German and Ukrainian research institutions are to be initiated and implemented. The basic prerequisite for funding is the adequate involvement of qualified partners in Ukraine who are relevant to the research topic. Universities or non-university research institutes that correspond to a research institution as defined in point 1.3 of the Union framework for state aid to promote research, development and innovation (OJ C 414, 28.10.2022, p.1) and have a branch in the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as research institutions within the remit of the BMEL, are eligible to apply for funding in the bilateral research cooperation funding priority.

~~2.2 Funding priority Transfer and exchange of expertise in the forestry sector~~

The aim in the area of knowledge transfer and exchange is to improve relevant expertise and facilitate practical experience and networking between German and Ukrainian forestry experts. The projects funded in this area should also be orientated towards the thematic objectives of this announcement. Research institutes of all kinds, associations, foundations and organisations in the forestry sector as well as commercial enterprises are eligible to apply for funding in the area of transfer and exchange of expertise in the forestry sector. The applicant must have a branch in the Federal Republic of Germany. The following measures will be funded under this call:

a) Group training courses in Germany

The aim of these measures is to promote the transfer of forestry knowledge and forestry exchange in the form of group training courses within Germany with the participation of Ukrainian forestry experts.

b) Organisation of group training courses in Ukraine

The aim of this measure is to enable forestry experts from German institutions, in cooperation with a Ukrainian organisation, to conduct group training courses focusing on one or more thematic objectives of the announcement.

c) Specialist information trips for forestry experts

The aim is to enable forestry experts from Ukraine to receive a professionally qualified and practical introduction to the multifunctional, sustainable forestry practised in Germany.

3 Eligibility requirements

An essential prerequisite for funding is the suitability of the projects with regard to the above-mentioned funding purpose and the funding object of this announcement in accordance with the underlying [guideline](http://www.ble.de/finw) (www.ble.de/finw). Further requirements are to be observed in point 6 of the Guideline on Funding Bilateral Research Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange for International Sustainable Forest Management of 27 May 2021 (BANz AT 24.06.2021 B3).

4 Type and scope of the grant

Only proven project-specific additional expenditure is eligible for funding. The provisions of state aid law listed in point 5 of the Guidelines for the Promotion of Bilateral Research Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange for International Sustainable Forest Management of 27 May 2021 (BANz AT 24.06.2021 B3) must be observed.

4.1 Funding priority bilateral research collaborations

Grants for projects in this funding priority are awarded in the course of project funding as a **n o n - r e p a y a b l e** grant on the basis of eligible project-related expenditure by way of proportional financing with an aid intensity of up to 100%. Grants for companies totalling EUR 500,000 or more are excluded.



~~4.2 Funding priority Transfer and exchange of expertise in the forestry sector~~

~~a) Group training courses in Germany~~

Group training courses for up to 15 people from Ukraine can be subsidised for up to three weeks in Germany to pass on forestry knowledge. The funding includes travel costs for economy flights to Germany, daily allowances and overnight allowances as well as expenses for domestic travel in Germany of the participants to be funded in accordance with the rates of the Federal Travel Expenses Act (BRKG). In addition, a grant in the form of a non-repayable fixed amount of up to 70 euros per day per funded participant can be approved for the necessary expenses of the training, whereby the total funding may not exceed the actual cost of the event.

~~b) Organisation of group training courses in Ukraine~~

Funding can be requested for a maximum of two forestry experts for up to three weeks for the purpose of organising group training courses in Ukraine. In this case, the funding can cover expenses for air travel, travel expenses abroad, daily allowances and overnight allowances in accordance with the BRKG in conjunction with the applicable General Administrative Regulation on the Reassessment of Daily Allowances and Overnight Allowances Abroad (ARVVwV), interpreters, translations, training materials and, if the conditions under grant and public procurement law are met, fees. In addition, up to 15 local participants can be granted a daily allowance of 10 euros as a non-repayable fixed amount and, in justified cases, travel expenses to the conference venue. The foreign partner organisation can receive up to 10 euros per participant as a non-repayable fixed amount for catering at the event.

~~c) Specialist information trips for forestry experts~~

Funding can be provided for specialised information trips to Germany for a maximum of 25 Ukrainian forestry experts. The funding includes travel costs for economy flights to Germany, daily allowances and overnight allowances as well as expenses for domestic travel in Germany for the participants to be funded in accordance with the rates of the BRKG. In addition, the expenses for the planning and realisation of the specialist information trips can be granted as partial funding as a non-repayable grant based on the eligible project-related expenses with an aid intensity of up to 100%.

5 Procedure

The procedures for submitting outlines and applications listed in point 7 of the Guidelines for the Promotion of Bilateral Research Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange for International Sustainable Forest Management of 27 May 2021 (BANZ AT 24.06.2021 B3) must be observed.

Both applications and sketches must be submitted in written form by post and in electronic form via the "easy-online" internet portal (<https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline/>).

Sketches and applications can be submitted twice a year, on 1 January and 1 August.

6 Responsible office

The Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) was commissioned with the funding procedure as the authorising authority (project management agency).

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Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE)

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7 Legal basis

Within the scope of this funding announcement, the BMEL awards grants for the funding of research projects on the basis of the General Administrative Provisions of Sections 23 and 44 of the Federal Budget Code.

This announcement is based on the Guideline for the Promotion of Bilateral Research Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange for International Sustainable Forest Management of 27 May 2021 (BAnz AT 24.06.2021 B3)

The guideline regulates the requirements for the structure of the subsidised projects and the objectives of the funding instrument as well as the legal provisions. When awarding grants, the requirements of EU state aid law must be observed in accordance with the principles set out in the guideline.

The ancillary provisions for grants on an expenditure basis of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for project funding (NABF) are generally part of a grant notification on an expenditure basis. The ancillary provisions for grants on a cost basis of the BMBF to commercial companies for FE projects (NKBF 2017) are generally part of a grant award on a cost basis. The ancillary provisions and the guidelines for grant applications are available at the following link:

https://foerderportal.bund.de/easy/easy_index.php?auswahl=easy_formulare&formularschrank=ble

There is no legal entitlement to a grant. The grant provider shall decide on the application at its due discretion. The granting of the subsidy is subject to the availability of the estimated budget funds.

8 Entry into force

This announcement comes into force on the day after publication in the Federal Gazette and ends at the end of 31 December 2025.

Bonn, 16 October 2023

Federal Ministry
for Food and Agriculture

On behalf of
M. Schwoerer
