

# Overall goals of the contract

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To contribute to

- Actions 6b: Develop a **Green Infrastructure** Strategy by 2012 to promote the deployment of GI ....., including through incentives to encourage up-front investments in GI projects and the maintenance of ecosystem services, for example through **better targeted use of EU funding streams** .....
- Action 7a: In collaboration with the Member States, the Commission will develop a methodology for assessing the **impact of EU funded projects, plans and programmes** on biodiversity by 2014.

# Specific objective of the contract

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“To develop and test a Common Framework for biodiversity proofing the EU budget to ensure consistency between the implementation of biodiversity policy and other EU policies....”

*‘a **structured process** of ensuring the effective application of tools to **avoid or at least minimize harmful impacts** of EU spending and to **maximise the biodiversity benefits**. It applies to **all spending streams** under the EU budget, across the **whole budgetary cycle** and at **all levels** of governance, and should contribute to a significant improvement in the state of biodiversity according to the 2010 baseline and agreed biodiversity targets.’*

# Focus of the contract

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## Focus on:

- Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), in particular the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
- Cohesion Policy funds, ie European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF)
- Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for energy and transport
- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

# Green Infrastructure

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- Definition

*“a **strategically planned network** of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features **designed and managed** to deliver a wide range of **ecosystem services**. It incorporates green spaces (or blue if aquatic ecosystems are concerned) and other physical features in terrestrial (including coastal) and marine areas. On land, Green Infrastructure is present in rural and urban settings.”*

# Rationale for a Common Framework

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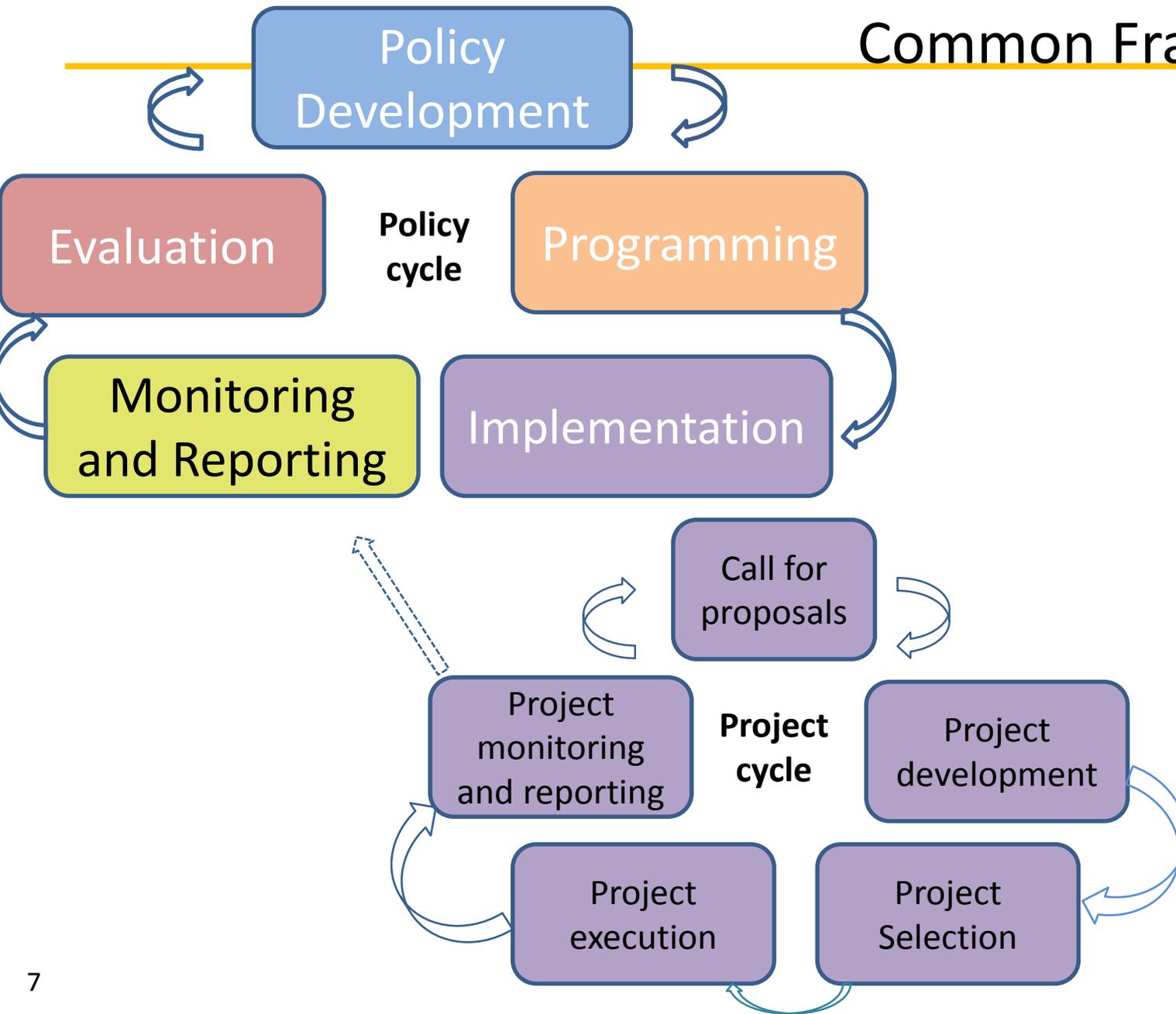
- Build on existing strategic orientation of the funds, for example, in the case of shared management funds (i.e. European Structural and Investment funds), through the **Common Provisions Regulation** and its **Common Strategic Framework**
- Increase policy **coherence** and **consistency**, amongst ESI funds, but also others – creating a **level-playing field**
- Increase **clarity** on requirements, so that authorities and stakeholders know what is required, thereby reducing administrative burdens and **facilitating decision making**

# Principles for a Common Framework

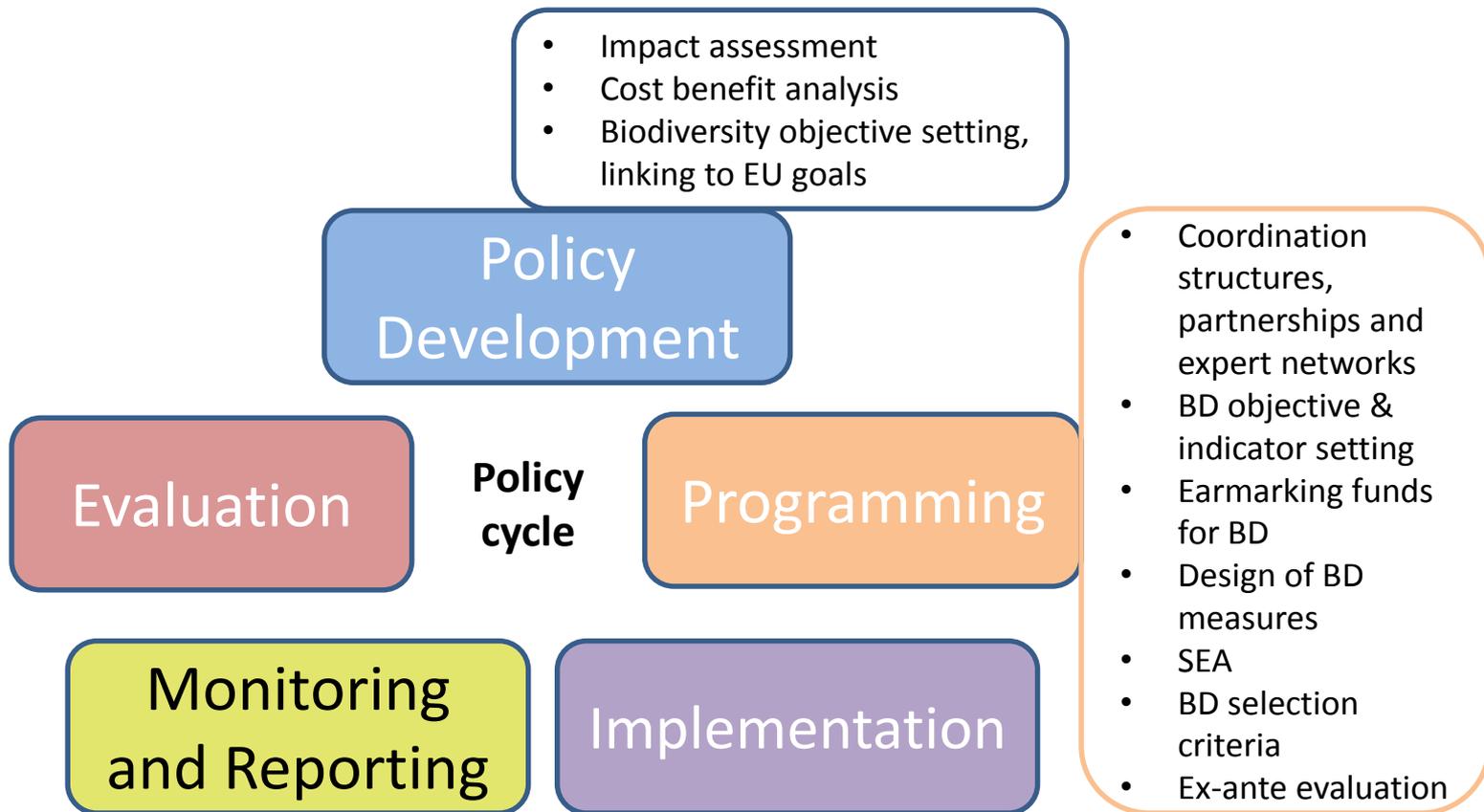
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- **Inclusive** – capable of guiding the proofing of most EU funds, while taking account of different needs and levels of assessment and action that are appropriate to each.
- **Flexible** – capable of distinguishing between the different needs of different EU funds and instruments, including those under central and shared management.
- **Proportionate** – ensuring that the level of assessment and action required is appropriate to the levels of impact and opportunity being addressed.
- **Practical** – offering clear guidance about actions that need to be taken.
- **Coherent** with existing EU policies and strategies.

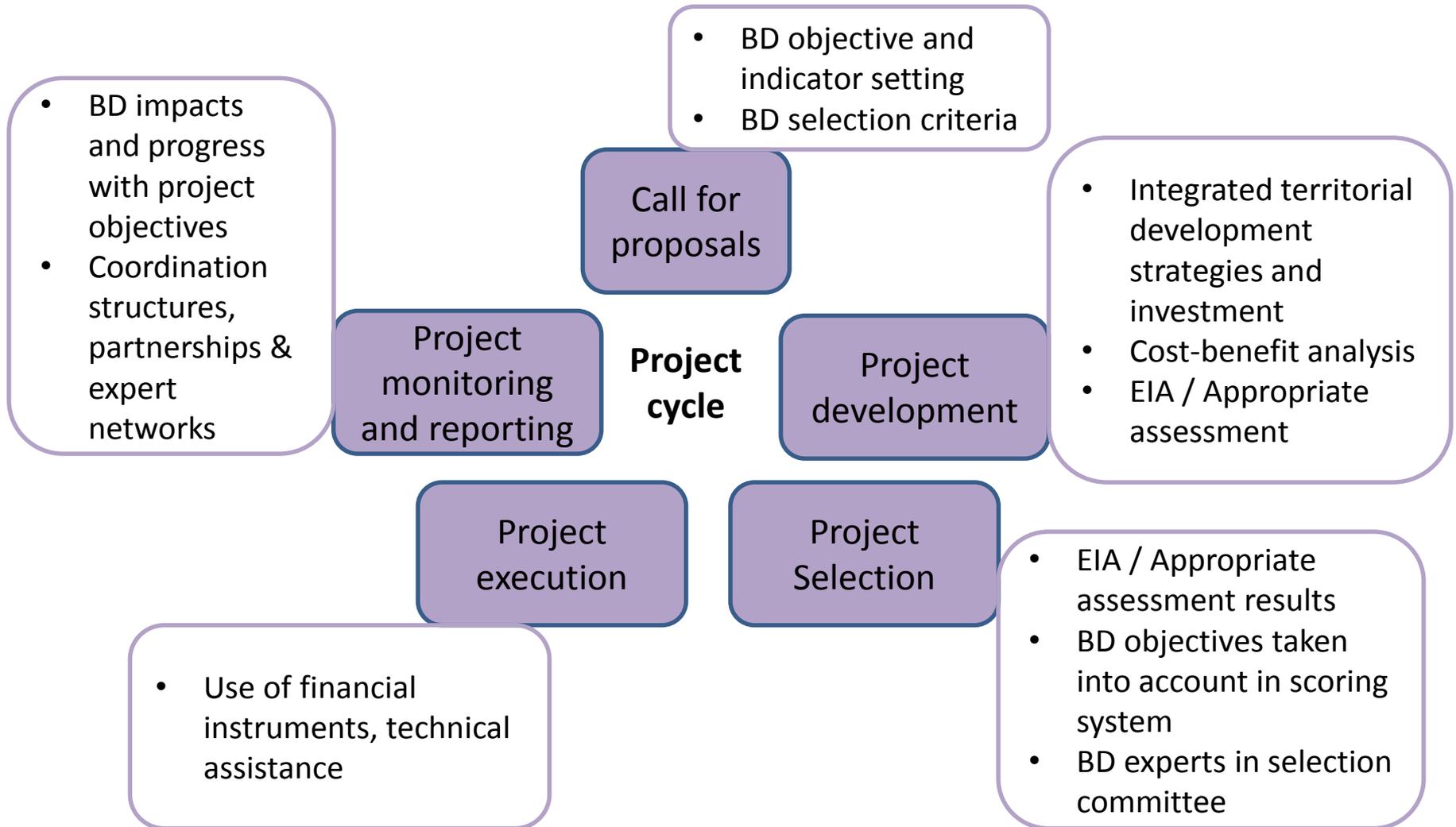
# The main stages of a Common Framework



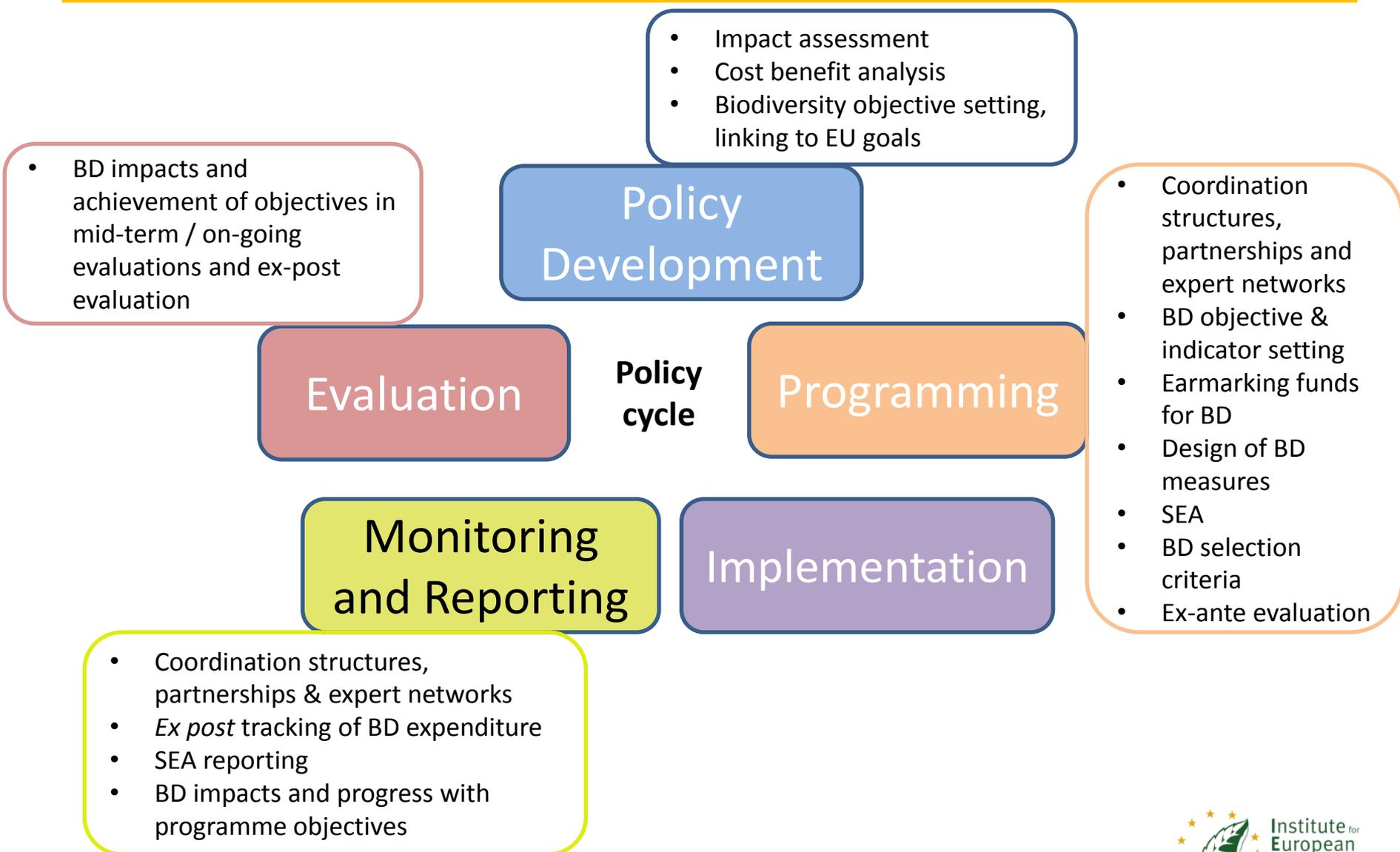
# Main tools for the Policy Cycle (1)



# Main tools for the Project Cycle (Implementation)



# Main tools for the Policy Cycle (2)



# Checklist for proofing – call for proposals

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- Have you consulted and used the expertise of environmental authorities, NGOs, and academia in your region/country to help draw up calls that can support biodiversity benefits and minimise detrimental impacts?
- Have you taken into account national / regional biodiversity strategies and objectives in drawing up calls that can support biodiversity benefits and minimise detrimental impacts?
- Have you taken into account the EU objectives for Green Infrastructure and the EU No Net Loss?
- On the basis of the above have you defined biodiversity objectives / biodiversity related selection criteria for projects and included them in project selection criteria?
- Have you appointed / created a specific institutional structure / role, e.g. sustainability manager, to coordinate biodiversity mainstreaming efforts and activities?
- Have you created special advisory groups who have expertise on biodiversity that will provide information to stakeholders and possible beneficiaries?
- Have you provided guidance and resources on biodiversity mainstreaming for applicants?
- Have you provided examples of good practice in the area of biodiversity mainstreaming?

# Checklist for proofing – Project development 1

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- Have you ensured that the project will not potentially have a adverse impacts on a Natura 2000 site?
- If the project may have an adverse impact on a Natura 2000 site, have you ensured that an Appropriate Assessment has been carried out?
- Have you carried out an EIA if this is necessary under the EIA regulation, or, if it is not, some other form of proportionate environmental assessment?
- Have biodiversity issues been fully assessed in the EIA, including impacts on all EU and nationally threatened habitats and species, taking into account all possible significant direct, indirect and secondary on-site and off-site impacts, as well as cumulative impacts from similar projects?
- Does the EIA identify clear actions (and contingency measures) that must be taken to avoid impacts (including project alternatives), reduce impacts and compensate for residual impacts in order to achieve no net loss of biodiversity in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy?

# Checklist for proofing – Project development 2

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- Does the EIA set out clear SMART biodiversity targets for mitigation and compensation measures (and thresholds that trigger contingency measures), and related monitoring and reporting requirements?
- Have biodiversity and ecosystem services been adequately taken into consideration in any cost-benefit analysis that has been undertaken of the project?
- Have you taken into account relevant guidance documents and other available information that can support creating biodiversity benefits in the context of the planned project (e.g. taking up nature-based solutions, enhancing or creating green infrastructure)?
- Have you checked whether an integrated territorial development (ITI) strategy for EU funds is in place in the area of the planned project?

# Checklist for proofing – project selection

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- Has selection taken into account the results of EIAs and other assessments of the expected beneficial and detrimental biodiversity impacts, to ensure that at a minimum detrimental impacts are within acceptable levels (normally achieving no net loss or ideally a net gain) and that projects with lowest detrimental impacts and greatest beneficial impacts are favoured?
- Has selection considered the reliability of proposed mitigation measures and, where necessary, compensation measures for residual impacts?
- Is project funding provided on the condition that intended mitigation measures and compensation measures are implemented, as well as additional contingency measures if biodiversity objectives are not achieved?
- Have you factored in - and appropriately weighted - biodiversity benefits created by proposed projects (e.g. using nature-based solutions vs. other solutions, enhancing or creating green infrastructure vs. grey infrastructure)?

# Checklist for proofing – Project execution

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- Has technical assistance been made available, ie are national and regional institutions providing technical assistance to the implementation of Cohesion Policy projects able to also provide guidance on biodiversity related issues?
- Have you ensured that the project is being carried out according to agreed permit conditions, with mitigation and compensation measures undertaken on schedule and to acceptable standards?
- Is specialist support (eg access to expert networks) available to help projects that are having difficulties with meeting their biodiversity objectives?

# Checklist for proofing – Project monitoring

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- Have you ensured that required biodiversity monitoring (eg identified under an EIA) are being carried out on schedule and to acceptable standards?
- Have you established reporting requirements on biodiversity related aspects, and will the results be publically available?
- Do the monitoring results indicate anticipated and acceptable biodiversity performance levels, or is it necessary to implement contingency / adaptive management measures to achieve agreed biodiversity objectives?
- To ensure the quality of monitoring and reporting, have national and regional expert networks been deployed to support the task?
- Are there mechanisms for identifying, documenting and publicising lessons learnt from the monitoring of impacts and the effectiveness and efficiency of implemented mitigation and compensation measures?
- Have you considered awarding additional funds to well-performing biodiversity-related projects?
- Have you planned for thematic biodiversity-related mid-term evaluations?