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Caraïbes

INTERREG CARAÏBES PROGRAMME 2021-2027

CALL FOR PROJECTS n°5

CREATION OF A JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SIMPSON BAY LAGOON

Opening date	Tuesday, May 5, 2026
Closing date	Wednesday, July 1, 2026 (12:00 AM, Saint-Martin time)
Procedures for submitting applications	Exclusively on the SYNERGIE-CTE platform
Opened priorities and specific objectives	P5 – For enhanced cross-border cooperation between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten, SO 12 – Cross-border cooperation between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten
Estimated total amount of the ERDF envelope allocated to this call for projects (exclusively reserved to EU partners)	100 000 €

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1. Framework of the Call for Projects

The INTERREG Caraïbes programme supports structuring projects that provide a concerted response to issues shared by the territories and populations of the cooperation area. Applying via a call for projects is the main selection procedure for projects, in order to be able to assess and prioritize the quality of the submitted applications.

This call for projects sets the conditions for supporting cooperation projects related to priority 5 entitled "For enhanced cross-border cooperation between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten", and more particularly projects related to the creation of a joint management plan for the Simpson Bay lagoon.

This lagoon first and foremost forms a natural border between two countries:

- the French part of the island, corresponding to the territory of Saint-Martin, an outermost region of France (OR)
- the Dutch part of the island, corresponding to the country of Sint Maarten, an overseas country and territory (OCT) of the Netherlands

The largest enclosed body of water shared by two countries in the Caribbean, and situated at the interface between areas of significant economic and tourist activity (airport, marinas, restaurants, down-town Marigot, Cole Bay, etc.), Simpson Bay Lagoon also represents a major transboundary issue for land-use planning and development, as well as a challenge in terms of ecology, environmental quality, and biodiversity protection. The creation of a joint management plan for the lagoon should help to improve the state of its biodiversity and foster the development of sustainable economic activities, in line with European Union guidelines. This joint management plan will be based on environmental and socio-economic studies, as well as on the ongoing cleanup efforts carried out under two other calls for projects, and will take their results into account.

Project holders are invited to submit their applications from Tuesday, May 5, 2026, until Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at 12:00 AM, Saint-Martin time, via the SYNERGIE-CTE platform.

The application must clearly and concisely set out the actions that the project partners wish to implement and be explicit about the "win-win" nature of the approach for all the partners, and all the territories which will be concerned. This insures a fair and sustainable cooperation in the territory of the Greater Caribbean.

Applicants must also demonstrate the added value and complementarity that their project offers in regard with other projects and initiatives already supported or existing referring to these two themes.

Finally, upon completion, the projects must allow the production of deliverables, pilot activities and tangible results for the territories and population.

2. Context

The INTERREG Caraïbes programme provides financial support for cooperation projects which are carried out between project holders in the Caribbean area and which contribute to the achievement of the cooperation strategy defined by the programme partners.

2.1. Cooperation Area

The INTERREG Caraïbes cooperation area covers a large number of Caribbean states and territories. Priority 5 focuses exclusively on cross-border cooperation between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten. The functional area covered by the implementation of this specific objective includes:

- **The territory of Saint-Martin** as a French outermost region (according to NUTS III classification of European regions);
- **The territory of Sint Maarten** (OCT).

Therefore, the cooperation area concerned within the framework of this call for projects is limited to the functional area above.

In this cooperation area, the ERDF funding is exclusively reserved for organisations based in a European territory, subject to certain conditions and provided that their involvement in the project effectively benefits the cooperation area.

2.2. INTERREG Caraïbes Cooperation Strategy 2021-2027

The INTERREG Caraïbes cooperation strategy for the period 2021-2027 has 6 priorities and 13 specific objectives (SO):

Priorities	Specific Objectives	ERDF credits budgeted for projects	
P1 - A smarter, more innovative Caribbean	Research, development and innovation	8 M€	23% 14.2M€
	SME development and competitiveness	4.3 M€	
	Digital connectivity	1,9 M€	
P2 - A greener, more resilient and low-carbon	Renewable	1,9 M€	25% 15.4M€
	Climate change and natural disasters	5,5 M€	

Caribbean	Circular economy and waste management	2,5 M€	
	Environment and biodiversity	5,5 M€	
P3 - A more connected Caribbean	Sustainable, smart and cross-border mobility	4% – 2.5M€	
P4 - A more social and inclusive Caribbean	Initial training and integration of young people	3.7 M€	27% 16.7M€
	Access to care and care systems	2.5 M€	
	Social inclusion and the fight against poverty	10.5 M€	
P5 - Saint-Martin / Sint Maarten cross-border cooperation		7% – 4.1 M€	
P6 - Facilitating and optimizing cooperation modalities in the Caribbean		14% – 8.9 M€	

With regard to Priority 5, it is noted for information purposes that it is divided as follows:

Development of the regional strategy for cross-border cooperation	70 000€
Environmental and socio-economic studies on Simpson Bay lagoon	350 000€
Clean-up of the Simpson Bay lagoon	1,5 M€
Creation of a joint management plan for the Simpson Bay lagoon	100 000€
Rolling submission (corrective actions, etc.)	2,1 M€

Projects applying for financial support under the programme will have to demonstrate how they contribute to the achievement of the Programme's strategy – detailed in Section 3 (Project Eligibility Conditions) – for the following priority and specific objective:

- Priority 5 – SO12: Cross-border cooperation between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten

Projects responding to this call for projects will be assessed by the Steering Committee based on the remaining amounts available.

2.3. Context of Priority 5 of the INTERREG Caraïbes Programme 2021-2027

This call for projects falls under Priority 5 of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme 2021-2027, which aims to strengthen cross-border cooperation between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten. In accordance with the INTERREG Caraïbes programme 2021-2027, a Territorial Strategy for Cross-Border Cooperation was signed on December 18, 2025, by the Collectivité of Saint-Martin, the Préfecture of Saint-Barthélemy and Saint-Martin, and the Government of Sint Maarten to guide the actions undertaken within the framework of Priority 5.

This strategy identifies the preservation and sustainable management of the Simpson Bay lagoon as a priority funding area under priority 5, due to its ecological and economic importance to the island.

This initiative builds on the actions undertaken within the framework of the INTERREG Saint-Martin/Sint Maarten 2014-2020 programme, which enabled:

- the completion of preliminary environmental studies;
- the implementation of a major program for the removal and treatment of shipwrecks;
- the establishment of the initial technical foundations for cooperation between the two parts of the island.

The territorial strategy thus aims to structure and deepen the cooperation undertaken, in order to ensure concerted and sustainable management of the lagoon.

It includes four main actions:

- Conducting environmental and socio-economic studies to better understand the state and needs of the lagoon;
- Finalizing the lagoon cleanup;
- Developing a joint management plan for the lagoon between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten;
- Implementing corrective actions to protect the lagoon's biodiversity and ecosystems.

This call for projects concerns the development of a joint management plan for the lagoon between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten.

3. Project Eligibility Conditions

3.1. Objectives, Types of Actions and Expected Results



Priority 5 – FOR ENHANCED CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN SAINT-MARTIN AND SINT MAARTEN

OS 12 – Cross-border cooperation between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten

Expected results and types of eligible actions:

Regarding this strategic objective, the call for projects is exclusively dedicated to **projects aimed at developing a joint management plan for the Simpson Bay Lagoon.**

Simpson Bay Lagoon is a cross-border ecosystem that currently lacks a common management framework. In order to coordinate the protection of its ecosystems, the regulation of human pressures and the development of tourism on both shores that is compatible with the lagoon's ecological balance, the project leader must draw up a joint management plan. In accordance with the territorial strategy for cross-border cooperation, this joint management plan must, in particular, define common rules and a shared management vision, establish mechanisms for binational governance, and provide for operational measures including, in particular, potential filtration systems, maritime transport and corrective restoration actions.

The projects that are part of this strategic objective will focus specifically on the Simpson Bay lagoon, and should **contribute to the following results**, expected by the programme:

- The development of joint initiatives between public sector and other stakeholders interested in cross-border cooperation
- Providing solutions to the challenges of cross-border cooperation and improving collaboration between the two territories

These results must be consistent with the results expected by the Territorial Strategy for Cross-Border Cooperation:

- protect marine ecosystems and biodiversity
- prevent environmental pressures related to human activities
- ensure the development of sustainable economic activities compatible with the ecological balance of the lagoon.

Also, as part of the type of action 'Implementation of selected cross-border cooperation projects in line with the defined cross-border territorial strategy', candidate projects must aim to implement cross-border cooperation projects focusing on *developing a joint management plan for the Simpson Bay Lagoon.*

Area of intervention:

Candidate projects must be consistent with the following **area of intervention**:

- Initiatives to promote territorial development, including the preparation of territorial strategies

Indicators:

The projects must be consistent with and contribute to the indicators defined by the programme, namely:

Indicator Type	Indicator	Unit of Measurement	Comment
Output indicator	RCO83: Strategies and action plans jointly developed	Number of strategy/action plans	The indicator measures the number of strategies and action plans developed jointly by the supported projects. Within the INTERREG Caribbean framework, supported projects must contribute to the results expected by the program and this specific operating objective. For this call for proposals related to strengthening cross-border cooperation, the joint strategies and/or action plans that must be developed by the partners within the framework of the supported projects may, in particular, pursue the following objectives: - capitalizing on project results and disseminating them to the public and decision-makers; - scaling up/expanding the partnership; - continuing the partnership; - etc.
Output indicator	RCO76: Integrated projects for territorial development	Number of projects	The indicator measures the number of supported projects involving multiple stakeholders as part of integrated territorial development strategies.
Result indicator	RCR79: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	Number of strategy/action plans	The indicator measures the number of joint strategies and action plans adopted by organizations within the framework of supported projects. Within the INTERREG Caribbean framework, supported projects must contribute to

			the results expected by the program and this specific SO.
Result indicator	RCR84: Organizations cooperating across borders after the completion of a project	Organisations	The indicator counts organizations cooperating after the completion of supported projects. Organizations are legal entities involved in project implementation, and cooperation must be documented based on a structured agreement between project participants. Organizations must be legal entities.

Assessment criteria:

During the selection process (detailed in section 5. Selection of projects), the projects of this call for projects will be analysed in the light of the following specific criteria:

Evaluative questions	Weighting
The project helps to strengthen cross-border cooperation between the authorities, governing bodies, economic and associative actors of Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten	2
The project includes communication beyond the regulatory obligation with cross-border cooperation stakeholders (authorities, governance bodies, economic or associative actors, population of Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten)	1
The project falls within the recommendations of the Territorial Strategy for Cross-Border Cooperation	2

3.2. Duration of Project Implementation

Project Execution Time:

Due to the eligibility period of expenditure, the implementation period of projects responding to this call for projects is limited to 16 months (from the date of signature of the grant agreement).

If, during the implementation of a project that was initially planned to comply with this implementation deadline, an overrun is necessary and in order to achieve the objectives pursued by the project, a request for an extension may be considered by the programme under certain

conditions. In particular, it will be necessary for the lead partner to anticipate this need and to inform the Joint Secretariat, to formalize a reasoned request for modification within the deadlines provided for in the agreement. Any derogation from this implementation limit will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

3.3. Financial Provisions

a) Financial support

With regard to expenses borne by European partners:

- The activities planned under the project will be eligible for ERDF support of up to 85% of eligible expenditure;
- This rate may be reduced according to the regulations on state aid.

With regard to expenditure borne by non-European partners:

- They are ineligible for support under the ERDF.

b) Eligible and ineligible expenses and simplification rules

The categories of eligible expenditure under INTERREG Caraïbes 2021-2027 are as follows:

- Staff costs;
- Office and administrative costs/indirect expenses;
- Travel and accommodation expenses;
- Costs related to the use of external skills and services;
- Equipment costs;
- Infrastructure and works costs;
- Communication and capitalisation costs.



Please refer to the details of eligible and non-eligible expenditure in the DOMO – Programme Action Sheets, in Section IV.

In addition, the managing authority implements a simplification strategy based in particular on the use of simplified cost options (SCOs) provided for by the regulations.

The table below presents the different applicable rules and options that can be mobilised depending on the expenses concerned:

Type of expenses	Possible ways of taking into account
Personnel costs	<p>Two options are possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of an SCO: a lump sum of 20% of expenses directly related to the project that are not personnel expenses - Actual cost: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Only personnel expenses with a fixed allocation rate to the operation will be eligible; o Only expenses related to staff allocated to the project at more than 15% will be eligible under the program.
Travel and accommodation expenses	<p>Application of a scale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if the structure has its own scale: use of the structure's scale; - if the structure does not have a scale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o civil service scale, for travel within France (within one of the ORs and/or in mainland France); o scale applicable to the missions of European Union officials (used in the context of Europ'Aid), for travel outside France.
Equipment costs	<p>Two options are possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of an SCO: 40% of personnel costs (this SCO also includes travel and accommodation costs) - Or actual cost
Infrastructure and construction costs	
Communication costs	
Costs related to the use of external skills and services	
Indirect Expenses/Office and Administrative Costs	<p>Exclusive application of an SCO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7% of eligible direct costs

The choice of the most suitable options for the project will be made on the basis of the estimated budget and relevant justifications. The Joint Secretariat will be able to support applicants in choosing the Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) that are most appropriate to their situation and most relevant to the project.

c) Compliance with procurement procedures and the notion of reasonable costs

For structures subject to compliance with public procurement, in the event of a contract already launched, all the contract documents must be transmitted in support of the expenses concerned when the application is submitted, if applicable.

For structures that are not subject to compliance with public procurement, the reasonableness of the costs presented must be assessed. Therefore, the managing authority specified the following rules when submitting the aid application:

- For expenses less than or equal to €40,000 excluding tax (unit cost): production of at least one estimated document of the expenses¹;
- For expenses between €40,000 excluding tax and €215,000 excluding tax: production of at least two estimated documents of expenses;
- For expenses of more than €215,000 excluding tax: production of at least three estimated documents of expenses.

In cases deemed necessary by the investigating department, contradictory documents or specifications may be requested.

The different quotes presented must correspond to equivalent expenses, and must not come from the same supplier/service provider. The supplier/service provider must not be in a situation of conflict of interest with the project leader.

The documents submitted must be recent (less than 8 months before the date of submission of the application). When the production of contradictory documents is not possible, the project leader must justify this impossibility by an explanatory note submitted to the request under SYNERGIE.

3.4. Partnership, a Key Element of an INTERREG Caraïbes Project

The partnership of an INTERREG Caraïbes project must provide for **at least** the following:

- **A lead partner** (in charge of the administrative and financial coordination of the project) **located in Saint-Martin²**;
- **A non EU-Partner located in Sint Maarten**

1 *As part of the submission of supporting documents in support of the application file and the estimated expenses, an estimated cost document may be:*

- *A quote;*
- *This approach was explained in a note that made it possible to verify the list of economic operators capable of satisfying a need on the market (sourcing) followed by an estimate made by a consular chamber, a cooperative, a design office, a project manager or any other expert;*
- *A screenshot of a website;*
- *A catalog scan;*
- *An invoice, paid or not;*
- *Or any other similar document, subject to validation by the managing authority.*

2 *The location of the leader in the ORs refers to the fact that the structure that carries out and coordinates the project is present and has a regular activity in the territory in question, and is not a simple "mailbox". This location is appreciated by the project appraisal.*

Projects must meet at least two of the following four criteria:

- be defined in common;
- be carried out jointly;
- benefit from shared human resources;
- be jointly funded.

Indeed, the partners of an INTERREG Caraïbes project are engaged in a common project (the project must be co-constructed, the participation of each partner motivated) and "win-win" (which will benefit each partner and each territory in which it is implemented). The programme authorities will pay attention to these characteristics when selecting projects.

Finally, the administrative and financial soundness of the project leaders, and in particular that of the leader³, will be assessed. Indeed, in view of the partnership dimension of an INTERREG project, and the operating rules of the programme, the ability of beneficiaries to pre-finance their activities, to ensure the administrative monitoring of expenditure, to ensure reporting, to monitor and justify indicators or to coordinate the partnership are indeed key elements for the success of a European territorial cooperation project.

In this respect, it is worth highlighting the specificities of certain partners:

- **Lead Partner:** The lead partner of the project is responsible for the administrative management and coordination of the implementation of the project. In this capacity, it undertakes in particular to:
 - o sign a partnership agreement with the other partners which includes provisions ensuring, *inter alia*, the sound financial management of the Union funds allocated to the INTERREG operation, including the arrangements for the recovery of sums unduly paid;
 - o assume responsibility for the implementation of the entire INTERREG operation, and as such ensure the financial, operational and administrative coordination of the project. He/she manages the reporting to the programme, providing support to the project partners and ensures that the information transmitted is reliable and justified and that the expenses presented by all the partners have been paid for the implementation of the project, correspond to the activities agreed upon and comply with the provisions of the agreement;

3 *The lead partner is financially and legally responsible for the project on behalf of all partners, is responsible for its physical and financial implementation and ensures the coordination of the various partners. European regulations (Article 26 of Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1059) provide that it:*

- *Establishes a partnership agreement to set the terms and conditions for the implementation of the project with the other partners. This agreement includes provisions ensuring, inter alia, the sound financial management of EU funds, including the modalities for the recovery of sums unduly paid;*
- *Be responsible for the implementation of the entire INTERREG operation;*
- *Ensures that the expenditure submitted by all partners has been paid for the implementation of the project and corresponds to the activities agreed upon by all partners and that it is in accordance with the document provided by the managing authority.*

- ensure that ERDF beneficiary partners receive the amount of ERDF grant due to them, in full, without deduction or withholdings.
- **Beneficiary partners**, who will receive an ERDF grant as part of the project: as recipients of a European grant, they are subject to strict administrative, financial and operational rules and expectations. They must therefore ensure the operational, administrative and financial monitoring of the co-financed activities in order to contribute to reporting and provide supporting evidence for the information submitted.
- **Associated Partner**: as an associated project partner, it is subject to the same rules and the same expectations of administrative, financial and operational rigour as the beneficiaries of an ERDF grant. They must therefore ensure the operational monitoring but also contribute to reporting and provide convincing evidence of the information reported.

3.5. Eligible project leaders

Project promoters for operations eligible under this specific objective include the following:

- National, regional and local public authorities and institutions;
- Public and private agencies;
- NGOs and associations.

3.6. The DNSH Principle or "Do No Significant Harm" to the Environment

In accordance with European regulatory expectations, projects must be compatible with the DNSH ("do no significant harm") principle⁴. The aim is for the managing authorities to ensure that the projects selected and implemented do not have a negative impact on the environment, in the light of the following six environmental objectives: climate change mitigation and adaptation, preservation of aquatic and marine resources, circular economy, prevention and reduction of pollution, protection and restoration of biodiversity.

Also, the projects must imperatively be consistent with the types of action defined in the framework of the programme; comply with European regulations and national legislation; and respect this DNSH principle both in their development and in their implementation.

⁴ Principle defined by the Taxonomy Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2020/852) and referred to in Article 9 of the CPR (Regulation (EU) 2021/1060)

4. Conditions for Project Admissibility

4.1. Procedures for Submitting the Dematerialized Application

Candidates are invited to enter their complete application directly on the SYNERGIE-CTE platform. **Only complete applications submitted by this platform will be considered.**

The data entry must be done in French and English for each section.

To assist candidates in the entry, materials are made available on the programme's website, and the Joint Secretariat team is at the disposal of candidates to assist them in the formalisation of their application and the choice of combinations of Simplified Cost Options.

When the application is fully entered and finalized, click on the "SUBMIT" button at the bottom of the page.

As a reminder, project leaders are invited to submit their applications **until July 1, 2024.**

4.2. Completeness of the Application Form

To be eligible, the project must meet the following conditions:

- The project is submitted *via* the information system, in accordance with the procedure defined by the programme;
- The application form is sent in French and English;
- The application form is completed in full;
- The required annexes (in particular: budget annex, logical framework) are attached to the file;
- The standard documents defined for the annexes are respected;
- Letters of commitment from the lead partner and partners are present, dated and signed;
- The supporting documents relating to the applicants (Kbis, status of the applicant and all partners, capacity of the legal representative to commit the structure, etc.) are sent;
- The supporting elements in support of the expenditure detailed in the budget annex (estimated documents, documents relating to staff costs, etc.) are sent;
- The lead partner undertake to send a RIB (or other for public structures) specific to the project if the project is approved;
- If the project provides for expenses including all charges (including VAT), a certificate(s) of non-recovery of VAT for the partner(s) concerned is sent;
- The documents attesting to the commitment of each public or private co-financier are attached;

- The project was submitted within the deadlines set for this call for projects;
- The final version of the application form is dated and signed by the Lead Partner.

Refer to the list of documents to be provided available on the program's website.

Any project that is incomplete at the end of the investigation and reminders will be deemed inadmissible and will be rejected.

5. Selection of Projects

5.1. Analysis of the eligibility of the project and the expenses by the Joint Secretariat

Initially, the applications submitted will be examined in terms of eligibility, legality and operational quality by the Joint Secretariat as part of the examination procedure.

The main eligibility criteria are as follows:

- The project complies with European and national regulatory requirements;
- The project associates at least a project leader located in Saint-Martin, and a non-EU partner located in Sint Maarten;
- The project partners cooperate at least in two of the following four dimensions: the development and implementation of INTERREG operations, their staffing or financing;
- The project contributes to the achievement of a thematic priority and a specific objective of the programme (a project that contributes to more than one priority or to more than one specific objective may be the subject of a specific subsidy);
- The project is consistent with one of the programme's areas of intervention.

For more details on these eligibility criteria, refer to DOMO, Section IV.



A project that does not meet the conditions for the award of INTERREG funding in terms of eligibility or legality will not be proposed for the opinion of the Technical Committee or the decision of the Steering Committee, it will only be presented for information as to its rejection.

5.2. Qualitative assessment and prioritization of applications by the Technical Committee

a) Procedure

In a second phase, the admissible applications that meet the eligibility and legality conditions will be subject to a qualitative score by the Technical Committee for Priority 5 of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme 2021-2027. This Technical Committee is composed of the technical representatives of the programme's partner institutions. Three types of criteria will be used to assess the applications:

- Transversal criteria, applicable to all application files;
- Thematic criteria, specifically defined for the priority 5 of the programme with regard to the programme's intervention strategy;
- Bonus criteria, aimed at promoting projects that contribute more to European and programme objectives.

The transversal and thematic criteria will be scored (from 1 (very insufficient) to 4 (very satisfactory)), and weighted by criterion.

The transversal and thematic criteria make it possible to define thresholds for the opinion on the operation, according to the procedure detailed in the grid of project assessment criteria annexed to these call for projects specifications. Three opinions are possible:

- Below an average score of 1.5 on each of these criteria, the project receives an unfavourable opinion;
- If the average score per criterion is between 1.5 and 2.5, the project receives a notice of postponement;
- If the average score per criterion exceeds 2.5, the project receives a favourable opinion.

The operations benefiting from a favourable opinion will be ranked according to their score, for their order of being studied by the Technical Committee for Priority 5.

The consolidated note and opinion of the Technical Committee for Priority 5 on operations will be forwarded to the members of the Steering Committee for Priority 5 to facilitate its decision-making on the granting of INTERREG aid and the programming of operations.

b) Qualitative assessment criteria

Transversal criteria:

Applicable to all operations, these criteria make it possible to assess the operational quality and structuring dimension of the project, the relevance of the partnership and the added value of the cooperation, and the prospects for capitalization for the cooperation area.

These transversal criteria, grouped by subgroups, are as follows.

Operational quality and structuring dimension of the project:

Assessment criteria	Weighting
The project contributes to a broader strategy at the European level (e.g. REACT EU, ERASMUS+, LIFE+, Cosme, the European Digital Programme (EPD), Horizon Europe, the Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative, the Connecting Europe Facility, European external funding strategies and programmes.), national, regional (e.g. Strategies for the Intelligent Specialisation of Territories, donor strategies), territorial on the cooperation area	2
The project clearly identifies the target groups and involves all the links in the chain (and in particular the final beneficiaries and users) from the design phase to the implementation phase of the project	2
The project anticipates its social, economic and environmental benefits	2
The retroplanning of activities is proportionate to the expectations of the programme	2

Cooperation partnership and win-win dimension of the project:

Assessment criteria	Weighting
The choice of the leader and the partners involved in the project is relevant, proportionate to the objectives pursued by the project and structuring (the partners have expertise in the field concerned, the partners are unifying, complementary)	3
The lead partner and the partners involved in the project and its implementation have proven experience (in the management and implementation of cooperation projects such as INTERREG or RCF, or in the management and implementation of European projects) to carry out the project	1
The lead partner and the partners involved in the project and its implementation have sufficient administrative and financial capacity to carry out the project	2
The project has a win-win dimension for all the territories involved (reality of the cooperation dimension and benefits expected by each partner clearly identified)	2
The activities planned by each partner are detailed and complementary, the level of involvement of the partners in the implementation of the project and in the expected results of the project is proportionate	3

The value of cooperation in addressing the subject of the project is clearly demonstrated and/or the results of the project could not be achieved or only partially achieved without cooperation	3
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Projects involving the conduct of studies:

Assessment criteria	Weighting
The professionals in charge of conducting the study provide guarantees as to the quality of the result of the study produced (profile and legitimacy of the consultants, etc.) and/or provisions are made in this regard	1
The study has a win-win dimension for all the project partners (does it cover all the project partners? in its scope or at least in a comparison or exchange of good practices dimension)	2
When completed, the study will have concrete impacts on the territories (will the deliverables be made available to the public? does the study provide for the implementation of pilot actions upon completion?)	2

Capitalization and sustainability of the project:

Assessment criteria	Weighting
The project takes into account the available knowledge and adds value compared to existing initiatives.	1
The expected results of the action are sustainable from a financial point of view (how will the activities be financed at the end of the grant?), from an institutional point of view (will there be structures allowing the continuation of the activities at the end of the action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the action?) and/or policy (what will be the structural impact of the action – e.g. will it result in better laws, codes of conduct, methods, etc.?)	3
The results of the project can be duplicated by other structures (possibilities of reproduction, extension, dissemination of the results of the action) and/or the project presents provisions to this effect.	2

Thematic criteria:

Specific to each specific objective, these criteria are detailed in Section 3 (Project Eligibility Conditions) for each priority and each specific objective.

Bonus criteria:

Applicable to all operations, these criteria make it possible to value the scores of projects integrating specific measures to meet the cross-cutting objectives of the European Union (respect for the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, sustainable development, environment and climate, non-discrimination, inclusion of people with disabilities, gender equality, etc.) or whose objectives and activities make it possible to contribute to the achievement of the strategy of the program beyond the priority in which they are broadcasting.

Each criterion is scored between 0 (the project does not contribute to this criterion) and 1 (the project contributes to this criterion).

These bonus criteria, grouped by sub-groups, are as follows.

Horizontal principles:

Assessment criteria
The project limits the impact on the environment and integrates environmentally friendly methods, both in the design and management of infrastructure and equipment, and in the delivery of services
The project ensures, through additional positive actions, compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
The project integrates the gender dimension (gender equality) through additional positive actions
The project prevents discrimination on the grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, in particular in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) - measures, structural strategies, or actions are put in place to prevent discrimination (hiring policies, integration of issues related to the prevention of discrimination into the strategies for disseminating the results of the project, etc.)
The project provides, through additional positive actions, for the accessibility of the project and/or activities to people with disabilities (e.g. accessibility of websites and digital applications, adapted accommodations, actions specifically dedicated to accessibility, etc.)
The project provides for a strategic use of public procurement (environmental clauses, social clauses, incentives for innovation)

Principle of sustainable development:

Assessment criteria

The project ensures, through additional positive actions not to cause significant harm (DNSH) or provides for mitigation measures, on the following dimensions: climate change mitigation and adaptation, preservation of aquatic and marine resources, circular economy, pollution prevention and reduction, protection and restoration of biodiversity

The project includes an eco-communication and/or eco-event policy

The project takes into account the negative impact of travel (encouragement to rationalise unnecessary travel, limitation of the number of people making the trips, preferential use of videoconferences, organisation of distance training, measures to compensate for the negative environmental impacts of the project, etc.)

The project integrates citizen dialogue, consultation and transparency in the choice of technologies

The project integrates environmental education activities

Projects involving the creation or rehabilitation of infrastructure:

Assessment criteria

The project aims to build infrastructure that is resilient to disasters and the impact of climate change

The project anticipates the potential negative impacts linked to the creation and/or rehabilitation sites (noise pollution, waste, air quality, etc.) and favours the use of good practices in the conduct of the work.

The project anticipates the potential negative impact of the construction of new infrastructure (carbon impact, heritage, landscape, biodiversity, ecological corridors, land use)

The project favours the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure over the creation of new infrastructure

The location of the infrastructure integrates the challenges of saving space and controlling travel

The project contributes to the orientations of the European New Bahaus

Structuring dimension of the project:

Assessment criteria

The project contributes to one of the cross-cutting dimensions identified by the programme, namely: strengthening the resilience of territories, supporting the blue economy, strengthening connectivity

The project contributes to one or more specific objectives of the programme in addition to the one on which it is based

5.3. Decision of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee for Priority 5, composed of the partners of the INTERREG Caraïbes programme, will decide on the programming of the operations presented on the basis of the proposal of the Technical Committee for Priority 5.

The Steering Committee for Priority 5 issues three types of decisions on applications submitted to it:

- Favourable
- Unfavourable
- Adjournment

These opinions are final and enforceable against the third party.

5.4. Provisional Schedule of the Call for Projects

The timetable for this call for projects is as follows:

- Opening of the Call for Projects n°5: Tuesday, May 5, 2026
- Closing of the Call for Project n°5: Wednesday, July 1, 2026 (12:00 AM, Saint-Martin time)
- Presentation of candidate projects to the Technical Committee: October 27, 2026
- Presentation of candidate projects to the Steering Committee: December 1st, 2026

6. Life-Cycle of an INTERREG Caraïbes Project

6.1. Project Implementation

a) Agreement

In the event of a favourable opinion on the project, an ERDF grant agreement is signed between the lead partner and the managing authority. This agreement specifies in particular the conditions under which the subsidy is granted for the execution of the project (expected deliverables, financing plan, deadline for execution, conditions for payment of the subsidy, etc.).

The lead partner is also required to sign a partnership agreement with all the project partners. This agreement lays down the arrangements for cooperation between partners, the amount of ERDF and the related activities to the subsidy, and lays down provisions for an optimal financial management of the awarded European grant.

b) Conditions for the payment of European aid

After signature of the grant agreement between the lead partner and the managing authority, an advance of 5% to a maximum of 20% on the amount of the European co-financing may be paid upon reasoned request of the lead partner. This advance will be deducted from the first instalment (or from the first instalments until the full amount has been recovered).

The payment of an advance is not systematic and is at the discretion of the managing authority. The decision to grant an advance is taken on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature of the operation and the situation of the beneficiary.

European aid is provided in the form of reimbursement of the expenses which have been paid off by the beneficiary, upon presentation and after analysis of an implementation report detailing the physical achievements of the operation (activities carried out, indicators achieved, deliverables produced, communication activities carried out, etc.) accompanied by supporting documents; and of the expenditure incurred, accompanied by supporting documents attesting the regularity and materiality of the expenditure and their connection to the operation. In accordance with the expectations of the program, payment requests are to be coordinated and supervised by the lead partner, and submitted on the SYNERGIE-CTE platform for the payment of the pay down and the balance of the project.

c) Modification of the project

During the execution of the project, minor or major modifications are possible under certain conditions: they must be the subject of a reasoned request from the lead partner and must have been approved by the programme.

Any request for modification of the project must be made within the deadlines set out in the grant agreement, and must be formalised using the documents provided by the programme.

6.2. The Obligations of Project holders

a) Advertising and communication obligations

The communication of the projects echoes several strategic issues:

- **To make the use of European funds transparent to citizens** by respecting the regulatory obligations regarding the publicity of European co-financing;
- **To make the EU's action in the INTERREG Caraïbes's cooperation area visible** by promoting projects and their results;
- **To ensure the sustainability of projects** by spreading project achievements to target groups and by disseminating good practices to maximize the results of supported projects.

In line with these issues, the program has defined requirements and a visual identity to ensure consistency in the communication process. Thus, projects supported by the INTERREG Caraïbes programme are expected to:

- creating a graphic charter dedicated to the project, which will be affixed to any information and communication document (brochures, kakemonos, leaflets, etc.) and to any administrative documents, minutes, attendance sheets, reports, etc. It must include the European logo with the reference to the EU, the logo of the programme and the reference to ERDF funding, and the logo of the project;
- creating a website or web page specific to the project;
- affixing a project poster, or a temporary or permanent plaque, on infrastructure projects;
- participating in project promotion events (either from the European Commission or organised by the programme and/or programme partners);
- organizing launch and closing project events.

For each selected project, a communication plan detailing the planned actions planned must be submitted to the managing authority: the aims are to comply with European publicity requirements, and at the same time, to promote the project and its achievements.

These various communication actions must be anticipated in the budget, as early as at the stage of project draw up, in order to meet the publicity obligations of the 2021-2027 INTERREG Caraïbes programme.

b) [Project monitoring and evaluation](#)

When applying, the candidate leader and the project partners specify:

- the project's planned contribution to the indicators defined for the INTERREG Caraïbes programme;
- the provisions for monitoring indicators;
- the methods of justifying the grades which will be indicated for each indicator.

Following the selection of the project, these values are agreed and the partners must regularly monitor the values achieved for these indicators and collect supporting documents proving the reliability of these grades.

Before project implementation, project team members agree on the grade assignment method; then, during project implementation, the partners report the grades achieved by the project and transmit the related evidence and supporting documents.

Team members are warned that the lead partner may be contacted to provide information and supporting documents with regard to the performance indicators within one year after the completion of the project.

Finally, the lead partner and their partners will contribute to the surveys and evaluations carried out by the programme, which may take place after the completion of the project.

c) [The obligation of sustainability](#)

According to this principle, the project must not undergo any major modification for a period of five years from the payment of the balance (this period may change depending on the regulations applicable to the operation) under penalty of repayment of the European subsidy received. These major changes correspond to:

- the cessation or transfer of a productive activity outside the NUTS level 2 region in which it received support;
- a change in ownership of infrastructure that provides an undue advantage to an undertaking or public body;
- a substantial change affecting its nature, objectives or conditions of implementation, which would undermine its original objectives.

d) Controls

In the context of the implementation of the project, or after its completion, beneficiaries may be subject to controls carried out by the managing authority and/or its service providers, by the national audit authority or by the European control and audit authorities. The beneficiaries must make themselves available for this purpose, and store and archive the various documents relating to the operation, in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

e) Prevention of conflicts of interest

In order to safeguard the proper use of EU funds, any conflict of interest situation should be prevented and/or managed. A conflict of interest "when the impartial and objective exercise of the duties of a financial actor or other person" who participates in the implementation of the budget "is compromised for family, emotional, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect personal interest".

Also, in the context of project implementation and, in particular, in the event of the use of external expertise (either being through public procurement or not), the supplier/service provider must not be in a situation of conflict of interest with the project leader.

f) Fraud prevention

In its regulations, the European Commission has imposed an obligation for managing authorities to fight fraud in order to protect and guarantee the defence of its financial interests. A principle is zero tolerance for fraud and corruption being applied, the management authority has put in place measures to prevent and report any fraud or irregularity. Irregularity is defined as *“any violation of a provision of Community law resulting from an act or omission by an economic operator which has or would have the effect of prejudicing the general budget of the European Union or the budgets of the territorial or national authorities involved in the management of European funds”*. Fraud, on the other hand, differs from irregularity by its intentional nature.

According to the European Commission, fraud is *“any omission or intentional act relating to:*

- *the use or presentation of false, inaccurate or incomplete declarations or documents, resulting in the undue receipt or withholding of funds from the budget of the European Communities;*
- *the failure to provide information in breach of a specific obligation having the same effect;*
- *the misappropriation of funds for purposes other than those for which they were originally granted;*
- *or the misappropriation of a legally obtained advantage.”*

In addition to its preventive measures, the managing authority has tools at its disposal, that allow it to report any cases of fraud detected to the European Anti-Fraud Office (O.L.A.F) and at the same time to refer the matter to the territorially competent judicial authorities or directly to the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

In a case of proven fraud, the beneficiary may be subject to recovery of the sums unduly received but also to criminal proceedings.

Finally, the managing authority offers external actors the opportunity to report any suspicion of fraud from the homepage of the managing authority's website (www.europe.guadeloupe.fr) in the context of the implementation of the 2021-2027 European programmes.

g) Protection of personal data

The Regional Council of Guadeloupe, in its capacity as managing authority, collects and processes the personal data of project promoters in order to ensure the processing of the grant application, the analysis of the file, the awarding or non-awarding of these grants.

This processing is based on the consent of the project owner, compliance with a legal obligation to which the Guadeloupe Region is subject, or its legitimate interest, as applicable.

The data is retained only for as long as necessary for the purposes for which it is processed.

<i>FINALITÉ</i>	<i>BASE LÉGALE</i>	<i>DURÉE DE CONSERVATION</i>
Creation and management of the project owner's account on the platform	Consent	For the entire duration of the account's activity
Grant application instruction	Compliance with a legal obligation to which the Guadeloupe Region is subject (<u>article 78 of the Law No.2014-58 (FR) of 27 January 2014 on the modernization of territorial public action and the establishment of metropolitan authorities</u>).	10 years from the last management movement, then sorting, destruction or transfer to the Archives.
Application assessment		
Grant award and management		
Conducting individual studies and statistics	Legitimate interest	Time required to achieve the objective targeted by the statistics

The data collected may include:

- For the project leader:
 - Last name;
 - First name;
 - Title;
 - Email address;

- Telephone number;
- Postal address;
- Position within the company;
- Legal representative's authority to bind the company to the project;
- Signature authority, if applicable;
- Bank account details (RIB);
- Tax and social security compliance certificate (for private project leaders).
- For the contact person:
 - Last name;
 - First name;
 - Title;
 - Telephone number;
 - Postal address;
 - Position within the company.
- For associations:
 - List of board members.

They are intended exclusively for the authorized services of the Guadeloupe Region, as well as for national and European control authorities.

In accordance with applicable regulations, the project leader has the right to access and rectify their personal data and, where applicable, the right to data portability. They may also request the restriction of the processing of their data or, where applicable, object to its processing/withdraw their consent.

To exercise his rights, he can complete the contact form for the DPO of the Guadeloupe Region by clicking [here](#) or send his request by email to dpo@regionguadeloupe.fr or by post to the following address:

Région Guadeloupe
A l'attention du délégué à la protection des données (DPO)
Avenue Paul Lacave – Petit Paris
97 109 Basse Terre cedex

A response will be sent to the applicant within one month of receipt of their request. If necessary, this period may be extended by two additional months. In this case, the applicant will be informed, and the Guadeloupe Region will explain the reasons.

If necessary, he has the right to lodge a complaint with the National Commission for Information Technology and Civil Liberties by mail: Cnil – Service des Plaintes - 3 Place de Fontenoy - TSA 80715 – 75334 Paris cedex 07 or by using the dedicated form: <https://www.cnil.fr/fr/plaintes>.

7. Practical Information and Contacts

7.1. List of useful resources and documents

- Link to SYNERGIE-CTE platform: <https://cte-2127.synergie-europe.fr>
- Submit your application *via* SYNERGIE-CTE:

Link to the tutorial to create a SYNERGIE-CTE account:
<https://youtu.be/DPzT78shpJI?si=wRCAMXStR9lkgUNL>

- Useful documentation and information on the programme website:

Selection criteria, Operational Programme – which provides details of eligible actions, conditions for application and criteria to be taken into consideration when formalising the application – in addition to other relevant documents, are available on the INTERREG Caraïbes Programme's website (<http://www.interreg.caraibes.eu>).

7.2. Useful contacts

- The Joint Secretariat:

The Joint Secretariat team can be reached at: interreg.caraibes@regionguadeloupe.fr

The team of the préfecture of Saint-Barthélemy and Saint-Martin can be reached at: sfepccr@saint-barth-saint-martin.gouv.fr