

**Interreg**



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**Estonia – Latvia**

EE-LV00048

## River Networks

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## A - Project identification

### A.1 Project identification

<b>Project id (automatically created)</b>	EE-LV00048
<b>Name of the lead partner organisation</b>	Tartumaa Arendusselts
<b>Name of the lead partner organisation in English</b>	Tartu County Development Association
<b>Project title</b>	Building Stronger River Networks: Empowering Rural Communities through Joint Action
<b>Project acronym</b>	River Networks
<b>Programme priority</b>	More cooperating cross-border regions and development of joint services
<b>Specific objective</b>	1.1: Enhancing efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions
<b>Project duration in months</b>	36

## A.2 Project summary

Please give a short overview of the project describing:

- the common challenge of the programme area you are jointly tackling in your project;
- the overall objective of the project and the expected change your project will make to the current situation;
- the main outputs you will produce and those who will benefit from them;
- the approach you plan to take and why a cross-border approach is needed;

The River Networks project aims to address common cross-border challenges related to the management and utilization of rivers crossing the communities within the program area. These challenges are relevant to both LAGs, "Tartu County Development Association" and "Sea Land," as they offer the opportunity to bring rural areas together to share resources, knowledge, and best practices.

The project's overall objective is to develop and implement a joint strategy and action plan for the integrated, synchronized, and complementary development of the River Gauja and River Emajõgi, with a focus on better use of natural resources, heritage, and attractions for economic activities while respecting environmental protection regulations.

The project's main outputs will include a joint strategy and action plan, as well as 2 joint solutions that will be derived from at least 8 pilot actions. Local governments, member organizations of both LAGs, and the wider community will benefit from these outputs. The project will take a cross-border approach as it recognizes the importance of collaboration and cooperation in addressing these common challenges.

The new and original aspect of the project is its integrated and synchronized approach to the development of the targeted rivers, taking into account economic, environmental, and heritage aspects to promote sustainable development and better management of the river banks.

## A.4 Project outputs and result overview

Programme Output Indicator	Aggregated value per Programme output indicator	Measurement Unit	Output	Output Title	Output target value	Programme result indicator	Baseline	Result indicator target value	Measurement unit
Strategies and action plans jointly developed	2,00	strategy/action plan	Output 1.1	Joint integrated strategy and action plan	2,00	Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	0,00	2,00	joint strategy /action plan
Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	8,00	pilot actions	Output 1.2	Pilot actions within integrated strategy	8,00				
Jointly developed solutions	2,00	solutions	Output 1.3	Solutions deriving from pilot actions (incl. investments)	2,00		Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	0,00	2,00

## B - Project partners

### Partners overview

Number	Status	Name of the organisation in English	Country	Organisation abbreviation	Partner role	Partner total eligible budget
1	Active	Tartu County Development Association	Eesti (EE)	TCDA	LP	200.993,75
2	Active	NGO Sea Land	Latvija (LV)	SL	PP	174.000,00

<b>B.1 Lead partner</b>	
<b>Partner number</b>	1
<b>Partner role</b>	LP
<b>Name of the organisation in original language</b>	Tartumaa Arendusselts
<b>Name of the organisation in English</b>	Tartu County Development Association
<b>Organisation abbreviation</b>	TCDA
<b>Department / unit / division</b>	
<b>Partner main address</b>	
<b>Country</b>	Eesti (EE)
<b>NUTS 2</b>	Eesti (EE00)
<b>NUTS 3</b>	Lõuna-Eesti (EE008)
<b>Street, House number, Postal code, City</b>	Pepleri 6 51003 Tartu
<b>Homepage</b>	www.tas.ee
<b>Address of department / unit / division (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Country</b>	
<b>NUTS 2</b>	
<b>NUTS 3</b>	
<b>Street, House number, Postal code, City</b>	
<b>Legal and financial information</b>	
<b>Type of partner</b>	Interest groups including NGOs
<b>Legal status</b>	Private
<b>Sector of activity at NACE group level</b>	S.94.99
<b>VAT number (if applicable)</b>	EE101783718
<b>PIC (from EC Participant Register)</b>	949945930
<b>Contact</b>	
<b>Legal representative</b>	Chairman of the board Priit Lomp
<b>Contact person</b>	Member of the board Kristiina Tammets

<b>Contact</b>	
<b>Email</b>	kristiina@tas.ee
<b>Telephone no.</b>	+37253409873
<b>Motivation</b>	
<b>Which of the organisation's thematic competences and experiences are relevant for the project?</b>	
<p>NGO Tartu County Development Association (TCDA) covers the territory of 9 municipalities in Estonia: Tartu city (rural territory - previous Tähtvere municipality) and rural municipalities: Tartu, Luunja, Kastre, Peipsiääre, Elva, Nõo, Kambja and from Põlva County part of Räpina municipality. The members of the NGO are municipalities, and also NGOs and businesses of these municipalities (minimum 1 per each municipality), in total 68 members. There are approximately 50 000 inhabitants in the rural areas of these municipalities.</p> <p>TCDA has been active in rural development since its establishment in 2006. In 2020 TCDA initiated the establishment of river Emajõgi cooperation network where approx 60 public, private and civil sector participants joined their forces to develop activities on river and river banks, organize joint marketing, contribute to the local development policy design and apply funding for investments for advancing sustainable development in banks and surrounding areas of river Emajõgi.</p> <p>TCDA has been in charge of creating integrated regional strategy for its region for 2 EU programming periods (2007-2013 and 2014-2020) and is in the process of creating the strategy for EU funding period 2021-2027 (strategy itself for period 2023-2027). Based on created integrated strategy TCDA has funded over 800 projects for total sum of 10,5 million euros.</p> <p>Please be informed that although PIC number is associated to name Tartu Rural Development Association (old English name), the correct English language name is Tartu County Development Association.</p>	
<b>What is the role (tasks and responsibilities) of your organisation in the project? If your organization is from Riga or Tallinn, please justify the participation in project and explain, how do the activities carried out with your participation contribute to the development of the NUTS 3 border regions (Vidzeme, Kurzeme, Pierīga, West Estonia and South Estonia)?</b>	
<p>TDCA will be the lead partner of the project and will be implementing the following activities of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project overall coordination; and partner is responsible for all activity implementation in Estonia;</li> <li>- carrying out collection of data and organizing all needed meetings, and related activities in Estonian side for strategy elaboration, regular info exchange with Latvian partner (and stakeholders);</li> <li>- designing and organization of trainings and study-trips;</li> <li>- In cooperation with Sea Land identifying pilot actions in Estonia and implementing them, evaluation of actions, proposal for using them for identifying joint solutions;</li> <li>- In cooperation with Sea Land identifying pilot investment and implementing it, evaluation of investment usage and transferability, proposal for using it for joint solutions;</li> <li>- promoting the deliverables and results of the project among its region and national stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p>TCDA is suitable for the above listed tasks, as it has profound knowledge of the regional and rural development and engagement of stakeholders and has also comprehensive experience in EU financed projects.</p>	

## Motivation

If applicable, describe the organisation's experience in participating in and/or managing EU co-financed projects or other international projects.

- Development of Moldovan rural areas by using the LEADER/CLLD approach

The program is financially supported by representatives of the LAG "Pärnu Bay Partnership", the LAG "Tartu County Development Association and IDIS „Viitorul", financed from the Funds for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The project main strategic aims were to increase the workplaces, economic activities and usage of existing resources. TCDA gained experience in being project lead partner and coordinating all activities in a cross-border project structure and communication with funder.

-Crowd4Region - Community Funding Experiences

The general project objective of the transnational Crowd4Region cooperation is to build up the capacities of LEADER action groups and local actors concerning the implementation of crowdfunding mechanisms. Crowd4Region will create unique opportunities for local SMEs, local non-profit organisations and social/community entrepreneurs. Project partners are Austria (Regio3), Luxembourg (Atert-Wark), Sweden (Halland), Estonia (Tartu Region) and Germany.

TCDA gained experience in being project regular partner in a large cross-border cooperation project, learning communication and management of large project.

-URBACT "Food Corridors"

FOOD CORRIDORS encourages the creation of a network of cities committed to the design of food plans that extend from the urban and peri-urban areas through a corridor that facilitates an urban-rural connection. It enhances the generation of production and consumption environments founded on a base of economic, social and environmental sustainability. During the project Tartu Food Corridors and Food Strategy have been established, also Green Festivals carried out. Project partners Portugal, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovenia and Estonia. TCDA gained experience in being project regular partner in a large cross-border cooperation project, communication and management of large project.

## Co-financing

Source	Amount	Percentage
ERDF	160.795,00	80,00 %
Partner contribution	40.198,75	20,00 %
Partner total eligible budget	200.993,75	100,00 %

## Origin of partner contribution

Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
TCDA	Public	40.198,75	20,00 %

## Total

Sub-total public contribution	40.198,75	20,00 %
Sub-total automatic public contribution	0,00	0,00 %



<b>Total</b>		
<b>Sub-total private contribution</b>	0,00	0,00 %
<b>Total</b>	40.198,75	20,00 %
<b>State Aid</b>		
<b>State aid criteria self-check</b>		
Criterion I: Is the partner involved in economic activities through the project?		
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?	No	Partner does not engage in economic activity
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No	Partner does not engage in economic activity
Criterion II: Does the partner receive an undue advantage in the framework of the project?		
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No	Partner does not use results in its economic activity (does not engage in economic activity)
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	Yes	Project partner will carry out trainings, partner will keep record of any trainees, engaging in economic activity.
<b>Result of State aid criteria self-check:</b>	There is a risk of indirect aid	
<b>GBER scheme</b>	GBER Article 20a	

<b>B.1 Project Partner 2</b>	
<b>Partner number</b>	2
<b>Partner role</b>	PP
<b>Name of the organisation in original language</b>	Biedrība "Jūras Zeme"
<b>Name of the organisation in English</b>	NGO Sea Land
<b>Organisation abbreviation</b>	SL
<b>Department / unit / division</b>	
<b>Partner main address</b>	
<b>Country</b>	Latvija (LV)
<b>NUTS 2</b>	Latvija (LV00)
<b>NUTS 3</b>	Pierīga (LV007)
<b>Street, House number, Postal code, City</b>	Atpūtas iela 1D LV-2161 Saulkrasti
<b>Homepage</b>	juraszeme.lv
<b>Address of department / unit / division (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Country</b>	
<b>NUTS 2</b>	
<b>NUTS 3</b>	
<b>Street, House number, Postal code, City</b>	
<b>Legal and financial information</b>	
<b>Type of partner</b>	Interest groups including NGOs
<b>Legal status</b>	Private
<b>Sector of activity at NACE group level</b>	S.94.99
<b>VAT number (if applicable)</b>	40008145762
<b>PIC (from EC Participant Register)</b>	
<b>Contact</b>	
<b>Legal representative</b>	Chairman of the board Kristine Zaķe
<b>Contact person</b>	Member of the Board Āris Ādlers

<b>Contact</b>	
<b>Email</b>	aris.adlers@gmail.com
<b>Telephone no.</b>	+37126468620
<b>Motivation</b>	
<b>Which of the organisation's thematic competences and experiences are relevant for the project?</b>	
<p>NGO "Sea Land" is a Local Action Group, which associates local inhabitants, entrepreneurs, and partnerships to reach new development goals for its region. "Sea Land" conducts activity in the municipalities of Ādaži and Saulkrasti, with approximately 20 000 residents.</p> <p>It is established to enhance and support local residents to participate in the development of rural regions and river and costal area activities (including fishery), to design and implement strategies for sustainable development of the region, to associate with public and private partners and other institutions in Latvia, and to pursue its main goal of improving the quality of life in rural areas and nurture regional development and cooperation.</p> <p>Sea Land has been in charge of creating integrated regional strategy for its region for 2 EU programming periods (2007-2013 and 2014-2020) and is in the process of creating the strategy for EU funding period 2021-2027 (strategy itself for period 2023-2027). Based on created integrated strategy LAG Sea Land has funded over 60 projects for total sum of 3 million euros.</p>	
<b>What is the role (tasks and responsibilities) of your organisation in the project? If your organization is from Riga or Tallinn, please justify the participation in project and explain, how do the activities carried out with your participation contribute to the development of the NUTS 3 border regions (Vidzeme, Kurzeme, Pierīga, West Estonia and South Estonia)?</b>	
<p>Sea Land will be partner of the project and will be implementing the following activities of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- responsible for all activity implementation in Latvia;</li> <li>- carrying our collection of data and organizing all needed meetings, and related activities in Latvian side for strategy elaboration, regular info exchange with Estonian partner (and stakeholders);</li> <li>- designing and organization of trainings and study-trips;</li> <li>- In cooperation with TCDA identifying pilot actions in Latvia and implementing them, evaluation of actions, proposal for using them for identifying joint solutions;</li> <li>- In cooperation with TCDA identifying pilot investment in Latvia and implementing it, evaluation of investment usage and transferability, proposal for using it for joint solutions;</li> <li>- promoting the deliverables and results of the project among its region and national stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p>Sea Land is suitable for the above listed tasks, as it has comprehensive knowledge of the regional and rural development and engagement of stakeholders and has also experience in EU financed projects, including Estonia-Latvia programme project.</p>	
<b>If applicable, describe the organisation's experience in participating in and/or managing EU co-financed projects or other international projects.</b>	
<p>SL has participated in below-mentioned project as part of participating in these project they have gained the experience in community engagement, communicating within EU project, reporting and</p>	

## Motivation

administrative requirements. In being part of INTERREG project mentioned above they have gained experience in being both project regular partner and associated partner of the project. They have an experience EU cross-border project administrative and financial management, responsibility and LP principle.

- EU Fishery fund Project "SEA all over the Year- Promotion of seaside lifestyle tourism" <https://juraszeme.lv/eng/category/collaborative-projects/> (Lead partner)
- EU Fishery fund Project "Towards Smart on the Coasts" <https://juraszeme.lv/eng/2021/03/09/project-towards-smart-on-the-coasts/> Partner
- EU Rural Dev fund Project "Smart Villages LEADER Network" <https://juraszeme.lv/eng/2020/10/08/project-smart-villages-leader-network/> Partner
- EU Fishery fund "Project "Development of a Seaweed Sediment Assessment and Management Plan by the Latvian Coast" <https://juraszeme.lv/eng/2020/10/07/project-development-of-a-seaweed-sediment-assessment-and-management-plan-by-the-latvian-coast/> Partner
- Interreg Central Baltic "Coast4us" Lead partner County Administrative Board of Östergötland (We as an associated partner) (2018.01.01.- 2020.12.31)
- EU Fishery fund "Vidzemes piekrastes zvejas tradīciju un nemateriālā kultūras mantojuma saglabāšana un popularizēšana" ( Preservation of Vidzeme coastal fishing traditions and intangible cultural heritage and promotion) Partner (01.03.2019- 31.10.2020)
- Interreg EST- LAT project "Estonian and Latvian entrepreneurs cooperation platform" with LAG Mulgimaa Development Center (Partner) 01.07.2017- 31.10.2018) - the LAG has rebranded itself (previous name "Sernikon")

## Co-financing

Source	Amount	Percentage
ERDF	139.200,00	80,00 %
Partner contribution	34.800,00	20,00 %
Partner total eligible budget	174.000,00	100,00 %

## Origin of partner contribution

Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
SL	Public	34.800,00	20,00 %

## Total

Sub-total public contribution	34.800,00	20,00 %
Sub-total automatic public contribution	0,00	0,00 %
Sub-total private contribution	0,00	0,00 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>34.800,00</b>	<b>20,00 %</b>

<b>State Aid</b>	
<b>State aid criteria self-check</b>	
Criterion I: Is the partner involved in economic activities through the project?	
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?	No Partner does not engage in economic activity
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No Partner does not engage in economic activity
Criterion II: Does the partner receive an undue advantage in the framework of the project?	
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No Partner does not use results in its economic activity (does not engage in economic activity)
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	Yes Project partner will carry out trainings, partner will keep record of any trainees, engaging in economic activity.
Result of State aid criteria self-check:	There is a risk of indirect aid
GBER scheme	

## C - Project description

### C.1 Project overall objective

Below, you can see the Programme priority specific objective your project will contribute to (chosen in section A.1.).

1.1: Enhancing efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions

#### Project objective

What is the aim of the project?

Objective should:

- be realistic and achievable by the end of the project, or shortly after;
- specify who needs project results and in which territory;
- be measurable – indicate the change you are aiming for.

The project objective is to develop and start implementing (with the help of at least 8 pilot actions) a joint strategy and action plan for the integrated, synchronized and complementary development of the River Gauja and River Emajõgi, with a focus on better use of natural resources, heritage and attractions for economic activities, while respecting the environmental protection regulations.

## C.2 Project relevance and context

### C.2.1 What are the common cross-border challenge(s) that will be tackled by the project?

Please describe why your project is needed in the programme area and the relevance of your project for the programme area, in terms of common challenges and opportunities addressed.

The River Networks project aims to tackle common cross-border challenges related to the management and utilization of rivers crossing the communities within the programme area. These challenges have relevance to both LAGs "Tartu County Development Association" and "Sea Land" as they offer the opportunity to bring rural areas together and collaborate to share resources, knowledge, and best practices.

Paying more attention to the balanced (bearing in mind economic, environmental and heritage aspects) management of river banks, can open up new opportunities for rural communities and businesses to access funding for projects and initiatives, as well as strengthen their capacity for collaboration and develop new innovative solutions for common issues. It can also increase the visibility of rural areas and promote sustainable development, helping to create a more dynamic and prosperous region.

Finally, it can help to build trust between communities and promote a sense of unity and a shared identity, which can contribute to greater social cohesion and stability.

The following are identified as more specific common challenges and opportunities to be addressed by the project.

- How to make better use of natural resources, cultural heritage, and attractions for economic activities (mainly in recreational sector by the River Emajõgi and River Gauja)?

There are common challenges on how to support and create ecotourism initiatives, what to prioritize for better engagement of communities and businesses.

- How to establish environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas in river basins?

Sustainable riverfront development plays crucial role in project targeted areas, as large areas are part of protected areas. However, the development of riverfront areas with amenities such as parks, trails, boat launches, and picnic areas can attract visitors and generate economic benefits for the local community. Both partners' territories face challenge on how to approach this in a sustainable way.

- How to improve the strategic planning regarding the utilization and protection of the targeted water ways?

Strategic planning involving all relevant stakeholders and creation of integrated approach for development of rural areas with lower entrepreneurship and low capacity of community engagement is common for both areas. By approaching to this topic together the both areas expect to provide better base for tackling these challenges.

Taking into consideration of common challenges and opportunities the project is needed for Estonia-Latvia Programme area to address the challenges of sparsely populated rural areas and demographic limitations that hamper connectivity, efficiency, accessibility of services, productivity, and innovation. Also the fact that small/micro municipal units have been less capable of investing in and developing areas far from urban centres, leading to their marginalization.

The project aims to strengthen local cross-border cooperation structures and governance, support cross-border contacts and activities between communities, enhance trust-building activities through joint events on community (NGOs) level, developing skills, public awareness and knowledge in participation and responsibility. It also prioritizes more cooperating cross-border regions and the

development of joint approaches in providing services.

Overall, this project is crucial for promoting balanced regional development and smaller disparities, strengthening rural areas, creating platforms for high-quality public services and a good living environment, and enhancing the sense of community and citizen involvement in cross-border planning and development of municipalities in the Estonia-Latvia programme area.

### **C.2.2 How does the project tackle identified common challenges and/or opportunities and what is new about the approach the project takes?**

Please describe new solutions that will be developed during the project and/or existing solutions that will be adopted and implemented during the project lifetime. Describe also in what way the approach goes beyond existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries.

The project will tackle the common challenges and opportunities in the integrated and complementary development of the River Emajõgi and River Gauja basins by taking a cross-border and integrated approach. This approach will bring together local governments, LAGs, sectoral agencies, SMEs, NGOs, and communities in a joint effort to improve the management and utilization of the rivers.

To address the challenge of making better use of natural resources, cultural heritage, and attractions for economic activities, the project will establish a joint integrated strategy and action plan for the support of community-initiated services and create support mechanisms for the provision of services in rural areas, mainly in the recreational sector. This will involve the piloting of services in both Estonia and Latvia and the elaboration of new services based on the results of these pilots.

To address the challenge of establishing environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas, the project will develop a joint strategic approach for the creation of support infrastructure in riverbanks and nearby areas. This approach will prioritize infrastructure investments to ensure the sustainable development of these areas and to better serve the needs of the local community.

To address the challenge of improving the strategic planning regarding the utilization and protection of the targeted waterways, the project will involve all relevant stakeholders in the creation of an integrated approach for the development of rural areas with low entrepreneurship and low community engagement. This will result in a stronger base for addressing these challenges and a more comprehensive strategic plan for the management and utilization of the rivers.

The project will also provide opportunities for the creation of new and innovative solutions for common issues and for the exchange of best practices between the communities and businesses. Furthermore, the cross-border and integrated approach of the project will go beyond existing practices in the sector and participating countries by promoting trust and unity between communities, contributing to greater social cohesion and stability, and promoting sustainable development.



### C.2.3 Why is cross-border cooperation needed to achieve the project's objectives and result?

Please explain why the project objectives cannot be efficiently reached acting only on a national/regional/local level and/or describe what benefits the project partners/target groups/ project area/programme area gain in taking a cross-border/transnational/inter-regional approach.

Cross-border cooperation is needed to achieve the River Networks project's objectives and results because the management and utilization of rivers that cross communities is a complex issue that affects multiple regions and sectors. To tackle these challenges, a cross-border approach is necessary because it brings together different perspectives, resources, and experiences, providing a more comprehensive and holistic solution.

Working on a local or regional level alone may not effectively address the common challenges facing the management and utilization of rivers, especially in rural areas who often lack capacity in addressing all problems. By taking a cross-border approach, the project partners and target groups can benefit from the shared knowledge, experience, and resources of multiple regions, resulting in more effective solutions. This can also help to overcome the limitations of working on a single local or regional level, such as limited resources or narrow perspectives.

Furthermore, a cross-border approach can also increase the visibility of rural areas and promote sustainable development, helping to create a more dynamic and prosperous region. It can also help to build trust between communities and promote a sense of unity and a shared identity, contributing to greater social cohesion and stability.

In more specifically cross-border cooperation will help:

- **Increased Capacity Building:** Cooperation between partners and their stakeholders will increase capacity building by fostering the exchange of best practices and supporting the development of joint strategy and action plan, and implementing pilots and solutions.
- **Improved quality of life and better public services:** Cross-border cooperation will help to improve the quality of life for rural residents by supporting the development of sustainable and resilient communities and allowing local governments to provide services that better service the needs of communities
- **Enhanced environmental management:** Cross-border cooperation in river basin management will improve the protection and preservation of the protected areas as best practices and will be used for sustainable land use and natural resource management.
- **Strengthened regional identity:** Cross-border cooperation will help to understand the importance and strengthen regional identity by promoting the sense of history, culture, and heritage of these regions.
- **Improved access to resources:** Cooperation between partners will improve access to resources, including funding opportunities, technical expertise, and knowledge sharing. Both partners (LAGs) and local governments can better develop support mechanism for local NGOs and SMEs. Also they have more strategic approach to attach any external funding for local development.
- **Improved infrastructure:** Cross-border cooperation will lead to the improvement of infrastructure and services by the targeted rivers.

Overall, the cross-border cooperation approach taken by the River Networks project is necessary for achieving its objectives and results, as it provides a more comprehensive, effective, and inclusive solution to the common challenges facing the management and utilization of rivers that cross communities.

### C.2.4 Who will benefit from your project outputs?

In the first column of each row, please select one of the pre-defined target groups from the drop-down list. In the second column explain in more detail exactly who will benefit from your project. For example, if you choose the category education, you need to explain which specific schools or groups of schools and in which territory.

Target Group	Specification
Local public authority	<p>Local governments who are members of TCDA and Sea Land play a crucial role in implementing sustainable development plans and managing the resources of their territories. The project aims to ensure the integration of local authorities' perspectives and needs into the development of a cross-border strategy and action plan.</p> <p>The main benefit for local governments is the opportunity to engage in cross-border cooperation, contributing to the development of sustainable, integrated and complementary river basin management practices. It will also provide better foundation for future implementation of joint solutions benefitting whole project covered area.</p>
SME	<p>SMEs of TCDA and Sea Land are extremely important for prosperity of local economy, especially in rural areas. SMEs have been one of the main target groups of integrated strategies of both partners. The project aims to provide further support for their development, to do it more efficient way and to enhance their competitiveness mainly in the recreational sector.</p> <p>The main benefit for SMEs is an access to more efficient and targeted support mechanisms (developed in cross-border cooperation), and the development of community-based services, providing a favorable environment for their growth and development.</p>
National public authority	<p>Partners plan to involve in their development actions also state institutions responsible for environmental protection management (as large areas of river banks are located in protected areas) - such as ministries, environmental agencies, etc. Including environmental state organizations as a target group will ensure that the project activities are aligned with the relevant national and international environmental policies and regulations. This will provide an opportunity for cross-border cooperation and knowledge sharing between state organizations, contributing to the development of integrated and sustainable river basin management practices especially in creation of supporting infrastructure for prosperity of local economy.</p>

Target Group	Specification
Interest groups including NGOs	<p>NGOs have played and continue to play a significant role in community engagement, promoting sustainable development and preserving the heritage and natural resources of rural areas. The project aims to support their efforts in the development of community-based services and to enhance their capacity to engage in cross-border cooperation.</p> <p>The main benefit for NGOs is the opportunity to engage in local and cross-border cooperation, exchange good practices, and contribute to the sustainable development of their communities. They will also benefit from capacity building activities, allowing them to be more empowered and engaged in implementation of future solutions.</p>
General public	<p>Communities (general public) of rural areas are the end-users of the project's outputs and the main beneficiaries of its activities.</p> <p>The project aims to promote their engagement in the development of sustainable, integrated and complementary river basin management practices with communication and community engaging activities.</p> <p>The main benefit for communities is the improvement of their living conditions through the development of support infrastructure and community-based services, providing better access to natural resources and attractions for economic activities (mainly in the recreational sector).</p>

### C.2.5 How does the project contribute to wider strategies and policies, including EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region?

Please identify and describe your project’s contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Please identify other strategies and policies to which your project will contribute and please describe the contribution.

Strategy	Contribution
EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region	<p>The River Networks project contributes to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region by addressing the objective of promoting sustainable development and protection of the Baltic Sea region’s environment. By improving the management and utilization of rivers crossing the communities in the region, the project helps to create a more dynamic and prosperous area, promoting sustainable development and strengthening the capacity of communities and businesses for collaboration. The project also contributes to the EU strategy by promoting the conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage and by establishing environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas. Additionally, the project helps to build trust between communities and promotes social cohesion, contributing to the stability and unity of the region. Overall, the River Networks project aligns with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region’s objective of creating a sustainable and resilient region that works together to address shared challenges.</p>
Other	<p><b>EU Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027</b></p> <p>The EU Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027 aims to achieve specific objective 8, which is to "preserve and enhance the countryside and its natural resources, including agro-biodiversity, soils and landscape, while promoting rural development and boosting the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors". The River Networks project aligns with this objective by focusing on improving the management and utilization of rivers crossing the rural areas, which are crucial natural resources for the countryside. By paying attention to balanced (considering economic, environmental, and heritage aspects) river management and improving the sustainable infrastructure in protected areas in river basins, the project helps to promote rural development and increase the competitiveness of local businesses in the recreational sector, while preserving and enhancing the countryside’s natural resources.</p> <p>The project also helps to promote ecotourism initiatives, which can contribute to preserving and enhancing the countryside's natural resources and cultural heritage. Furthermore, the project will involve communities in the process of strategic planning for river utilization and protection, which can contribute to the development of rural areas and increase the engagement of local communities in the development of their own territories.</p> <p>Overall, the River Networks project contributes to the EU Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027 by preserving and enhancing the countryside and its natural resources, promoting rural development, and increasing the competitiveness of the local economy, which are all key elements of specific objective 8.</p>

**C.2.6 Which synergies with past or current EU and other projects or initiatives will the project make use of?**

Project or Initiative	Synergy
Projects financed under Integrated strategy of TCDA for period of 2007-2013 and 2014-2022	TCDA has financed over 800 projects and provided 10,5 million euros support for these project. Knowledge of these project will be used and there is clear synergy with development actions supported by thee projects.
Projects financed under Integrated strategy of Sea Land for period of 2014-2022	Sea Land has financed over 60 projects and provided over 3 million euros support for these project. Knowledge of these project will be used and there is clear synergy with development actions supported by thee projects.

**C.2.7 How does the project build on available knowledge?**

Please describe the experiences/lessons learned that the project draws on, and other available knowledge the project capitalises on.

The River Networks project builds on the available knowledge of both LAGs, Tartu County Development Association and Sea Land, by leveraging their experiences and lessons learned. The project partners have a wealth of expertise in rural development, natural resource management, sustainable tourism and cross-border cooperation, which they can use to inform the project activities. They have extensive knowledge on the challenges of their regions.

The project also takes into account other available knowledge and best practices in the sector, such as integrated rural development (including in river areas), riverfront development, and community engagement. By drawing on these experiences, the project partners are able to design and implement activities that are tailored to the specific needs and challenges of their communities, while also taking into account the latest developments in their respective fields. However, by meeting with each other they have realized that if combining these knowledges they can achieve better results.

Moreover, by collaborating with each other and working together on a common goal, the project partners can share their knowledge and learn from each other, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement. Through this exchange of knowledge and expertise, the project partners are able to build on the existing knowledge of both LAGs and create innovative solutions that respond to the specific challenges of the programme area. And also provide more effective funding for their areas in the future.

## C.3 Project partnership

Describe the structure of your partnership and explain why these partners are needed to implement the project and to achieve project objectives.

The partnership in the project is structured with Tartu County Development Association (TCDA) serving as the Lead Partner and Sea Land as a regular partner. TCDA will take on the responsibility for overall project management, but the partners will collaborate closely to carry out activities in a joint manner wherever possible. This includes holding local meetings and implementing local actions and investments under the responsibility of specific partners.

Project partners are both LAGs covering territories where major challenge and also opportunity is the river that passes through them (rivers Gauja and Emajõgi). Be it environmental concerns or socio-economic situation, the river plays an important role for the well-being and prosperity of the region. Therefore it can be said that each partner brings unique strengths and skills to the partnership that are essential to the successful implementation of the project and achievement of its objectives. For example, both partners have extensive experience in rural development and working with local communities, and TCDA also has already working Emajõgi River network which experience can be used for overall networking; Sea Land has extensive expertise in the development of sustainable tourism initiatives and environmental management in river basin areas.

The partnership also involves a number of key stakeholders and target groups, including local governments, SMEs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the project area, who are members of both LAGs. Through these member organizations the expertise of partners are more diverse.

The participation of local governments is critical in ensuring that the project addresses the specific needs and challenges faced by communities in the project area and ensuring that joint solution have potential to be implemented. The involvement SMEs provides valuable expertise and support in areas such as environmental management and sustainable development. The participation of NGOs helps to engage local communities and increase their awareness of the project and its benefits.

Overall, the diverse mix of partners and member organizations of partners is crucial to the success of the project, as it ensures that all perspectives and needs are taken into account, and that the project is implemented in a way that is both effective and sustainable.

## C.4 Project work plan

Number
1

## Work package 1

### Work package

When creating work package:

- please consider objective of the project;
- please consider the requirements of the chosen specific objective (Programme Manual, Chapter 3) and communication;
- please consider the required deliverables, outputs and results.

Title of the work package.

Compilation of Integrated Development of the River Gauja and River Emajõgi through Joint Strategy and Pilot Actions

Aim of the work package. Please explain why the following activities have been selected to form a separate work package?

The aim of the work package overlaps with the aim of the whole project: to develop and start implementing (with the help of at least 8 pilot actions) a joint strategy and action plan for the integrated, synchronized and complementary development of the River Gauja and River Emajõgi, with a focus on better use of natural resources, heritage and attractions for economic activities, while respecting the environmental protection regulations.

### Activities

Activity 1.1	
<b>Title</b>	Compilation of the strategy and action plan
<b>Start period</b>	Period 1, 1 - 4
<b>End period</b>	Period 4, 13 - 16
<b>Description</b>	Contracting external experts to support the compilation process. Regular meetings (at least every 2 months) and communication with the experts. Compilation of the task force of the stakeholders representing the partner regions, who review the drafts of the strategy and action plan. Local networking and working meetings with key stakeholders of the riverside areas (2 in EE and 2 in LV with ca 15-20 participants each), who will be engaged in implementation of the strategy and action plan.
<b>Partner(s) involved</b>	TCDA, SL



<b>Deliverables 1.1</b>			
Running number	Deliverable title	Description	Delivery period

<b>Activity 1.2</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Study trips to partner regions
<b>Start period</b>	Period 2, 5 - 8
<b>End period</b>	Period 3, 9 - 12
<b>Description</b>	<p>2 study trips (EE stakeholders to LV partner region and LV stakeholders to EE partner region) to get acquainted with the regional specifics, developments to date, challenges and people.</p> <p>Both trips with a duration of 2-3 days and ca 15 participants.</p> <p>The study trips will be the basis for building wider cross-border networks of stakeholders and laying ground for joint networking meetings.</p>
<b>Partner(s) involved</b>	TCDA, SL

<b>Deliverables 1.2</b>			
Running number	Deliverable title	Description	Delivery period

<b>Activity 1.3</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Study trip to Finland
<b>Start period</b>	Period 2, 5 - 8
<b>End period</b>	Period 3, 9 - 12
<b>Description</b>	<p>1 joint ST with EE and LV stakeholders and project partners for approx 4 days (ca 15 p from EE and LV) to a LAG with similar geographic features (passing river) and challenges (combining economic, heritage and environmental issues with the regional development actions). Initially identified Pidä-Saaristo Siistinä RY (LAG in Finland). When ST is planned then new analysis of possible Leader groups will be made.</p> <p>PSS has been operating since 1969 and has over</p>

<b>Activity 1.3</b>	
	<p>13,000 members. The organization's goal is to keep Finland's coastal areas and archipelago clean and to support opportunities for recreational boating and enjoying Finnish waterways.</p> <p>ST to Finland will allow partners to gain inspiration and find cooperation opportunities with them, to use different innovative solutions, so that the waterways are clean and in even more active use. Their activities serve as an excellent example of environmentally friendly and innovative water activities, community involvement and network creation.</p>
<b>Partner(s) involved</b>	TCDA, SL

<b>Deliverables 1.3</b>			
<b>Running number</b>	<b>Deliverable title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Delivery period</b>

<b>Activity 1.4</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Joint networking meetings
<b>Start period</b>	Period 6, 21 - 24
<b>End period</b>	Period 8, 29 - 32
<b>Description</b>	<p>Two joint networking meetings, 1 in LV (ca 17 LV and ca 8 EE participants), 1 in EE (ca 17 EE and ca 8 LV participants).</p> <p>The participants will be representing the key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the strategy and action plan.</p> <p>The networking meetings will focus on experience exchange, local problems and solutions offered /tested, and the issues of integrating the points of the strategy and action plan into the activity plans of both LAGs and the action plans annexed to the development plans of the municipalities located on the territories of both LAGs.</p>
<b>Partner(s) involved</b>	TCDA, SL

<b>Deliverables 1.4</b>			
<b>Running number</b>	<b>Deliverable title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Delivery period</b>

<b>Activity 1.5</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Pilot actions implemented in Estonia and Latvia
<b>Start period</b>	Period 5, 17 - 20
<b>End period</b>	Period 8, 29 - 32
<b>Description</b>	<p>Based on the proposals of the action plan, at least 4 pilot actions will be implemented both in Estonia and Latvia (in total at least 8), including 3 "soft" pilot actions and 1 pilot action related to infrastructure in both countries.</p> <p>To ensure real practical cooperation while implementing of activity 1.5 Pilot actions implemented in Estonia and Latvia a joint task force (members from Estonia and Latvia, 6-10 members) will be formed to decide what pilot actions will be implemented - depending on jointly elaborated strategy and action plan. Task force will regularly monitor implementation of pilot actions and for each pilot action a suitability report will be prepared stating main aspects of replication and transferability of action in RN project territory (both in Estonia and Latvia). Task force has the right to include experts depending on specifics of the pilot action - if so then experts of both countries will be involved.</p>
<b>Partner(s) involved</b>	TCDA, SL

<b>Deliverables 1.5</b>			
<b>Running number</b>	<b>Deliverable title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Delivery period</b>

<b>Activity 1.6</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Local trainings
<b>Start period</b>	Period 6, 21 - 24

<b>Activity 1.6</b>	
<b>End period</b>	Period 9, 33 - 36
<b>Description</b>	<p>The trainings will be based on the experience and lessons learnt of the pilot actions and the broader context of implementation of the strategy and action plan. The trainings are targeted for communities and members of LAG TCDA and Sea Land with an aim to learn from pilot actions and increase readiness for implementation of joint solutions. Both strategy and pilot actions will give input to training programme elaboration.</p> <p>2 local trainings will be held in EE and 2 in LV with ca 20 participants at each training.</p>
<b>Partner(s) involved</b>	TCDA, SL

<b>Deliverables 1.6</b>			
<b>Running number</b>	<b>Deliverable title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Delivery period</b>

<b>Activity 1.7</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Communication activities
<b>Start period</b>	Period 1, 1 - 4
<b>End period</b>	Period 9, 33 - 36
<b>Description</b>	<p>Regular communication activities throughout the project implementation to reach the local communities, NGOs and SMEs, and other key stakeholders supporting, contributing and/or enabling the compilation and implementation of the strategy and action plan.</p> <p>Articles in municipal newspapers            FB posts on partners' website            Project information on the partners' webpages.            Targeted campaigns for inviting participants to the project events: study trips, trainings/workshops, networking meetings.</p>
<b>Partner(s) involved</b>	TCDA, SL

<b>Deliverables 1.7</b>			
<b>Running number</b>	<b>Deliverable title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Delivery period</b>

## Outputs

<b>Output 1.1</b>	
<b>Output Title</b>	Joint integrated strategy and action plan
<b>Programme Output Indicator</b>	O1.1A: Strategies and action plans jointly developed
<b>Measurement Unit</b>	strategy/action plan
<b>Target Value</b>	2,00
<b>Delivery period</b>	Period 4, 13 - 16
<b>Output Description</b>	Output outlines a joint strategy and action plan for the integrated and sustainable development of the River Gauja and River Emajõgi, taking into consideration the protection of the environment and the use of natural resources, heritage and attractions for economic activities.
<b>Output 1.2</b>	
<b>Output Title</b>	Pilot actions within integrated strategy
<b>Programme Output Indicator</b>	O1.1B: Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects
<b>Measurement Unit</b>	pilot actions
<b>Target Value</b>	8,00
<b>Delivery period</b>	Period 7, 25 - 28
<b>Output Description</b>	Output consists of eight pilot investments in Estonia and Latvia to demonstrate the practical application of the joint integrated strategy. These pilots aim to address the challenge of establishing environmentally friendly infrastructure in protected areas, providing a proof of concept that can be replicated in other regions. The pilots will help validate and refine the project methodology and identify potential obstacles.
<b>Output 1.3</b>	
<b>Output Title</b>	Solutions deriving from pilot actions (incl. investments)
<b>Programme Output Indicator</b>	O1.1C: Jointly developed solutions
<b>Measurement Unit</b>	solutions

<b>Output 1.3</b>	
<b>Target Value</b>	2,00
<b>Delivery period</b>	Period 9, 33 - 36
<b>Output Description</b>	It encompasses solutions that will result from pilot actions (investments and soft actions) Solutions will address the challenges of establishing environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas within river basins, as well as the challenges of using natural resources, heritage and attractions for economic activities. They will be derived from real-life implementation of the project's methodology and be validated and refined based on the results of the pilot actions.

## Investments

### Investment 1.1

#### Title

Pilot infrastructure investment in Estonia

#### Expected delivery period

Period 7, 25 - 28

#### Justification

Please explain why this investment is needed.

One of the main challenges of the project is “how to establish environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas in river basins?”

Therefore, besides developing the joint strategy and action plan the partners are interested in setting real life examples (1 in EE and 1 in LV) that address the given challenge in a sustainable manner.

A pilot investment is needed for supporting the project objectives as it allows for the testing and demonstration of the project's solutions and approaches in a real-life setting (1 pilot in Estonia and 1 pilot in Latvia). This enables the partners to validate and refine the project's methodology and to identify potential obstacles that need to be addressed. Additionally, the pilot investment serves as a proof of concept, which can then be replicated in other regions.

Please clearly describe the cross-border relevance of the investment.

Although the exact investment is not selected, the investment is intended to have a cross-border relevance, as:

- it is based on a jointly developed strategy and action plan;
- the final choice regarding the pilot investment is done jointly by the partners;
- the pilot investment will showcase the benefits of cross-border cooperation, i.e. joint development of the strategy and action plan;
- the results of the pilot investment will be promoted on both sides of the border;
- the pilot investment will address the common challenges present on both sides of the border.

Please describe who is benefiting (e.g. partners, regions, end-users, etc.) from this investment, and in what way.

Although the exact investment is not selected, the probable beneficiaries of the investment will include local communities, project partners and their member municipalities, users of the waterways (the River Emajõgi).

In the case of pilot investment, please clarify which problem it tackles, which findings you expect from it, how it can be replicated, and how the experience coming from it will be used for the benefit of the programme area.

As the investment site will be decided the latest during the period 5 of the project, the exact location and type of the investment is unknown. Therefore, the questions stated above cannot be exactly answered.

However, the pilot investment must correspond to the following criteria:

- The investment must address the second common challenges listed in the section C.2.1.: How to establish environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas in river basins?
- The investment must be located in the protected area.
- The investment must fall under the scope of the joint strategy and action plan.
- The risks related to receiving permissions for installing the investment in time must be minimal.
- The ownership status of the investment site must be clear and transparent.
- The investment must be durable, i.e. last at least 5 years after the project's end.
- It must be possible to replicate the solution in other areas, i.e. it cannot be unique location-specific solution.
- The investment must fit within the planned budget limitations (together with LV investment up to 10% of the total project budget). Partners realize that in case the pilot investment requires more funding, they will cover it from own resources (to ensure that piloting will not be carried out due to insufficiency of funds)

<b>Location of the physical investment</b>	
<b>Country</b>	Eesti (EE)
<b>NUTS 2</b>	Eesti (EE00)
<b>NUTS 3</b>	Lõuna-Eesti (EE008)
<b>Street House number, Postal code, City</b>	N/A N/A, N/A, Tartu/Luunjä/Kastre/Peipsiääre/Elva /Nõo/Kambja/Räpin

## **Risk associated with the investment**

Describe the risk associated with the investment, go/no-go decisions, etc. (if any).

The exact risks cannot be listed at the time of submission of the application (Feb. 2023), as the selection of investment is not made yet.

The risks to be associated with the selected investments must be very low and without significant impact on its timely implementation.

## **Investment documentation**

Please list all technical requirements and permissions (e.g. building permits) required for the investment according to the respective national legislation. If these are already available, attach them to this application form, otherwise indicate when you expect them to be available.

The need to acquire technical documentation will be clarified by period 5. If necessary, the documentation will be submitted the latest during the period 6.

For investments in infrastructure with an expected lifespan of at least five years, please indicate whether an assessment of expected impacts of climate change has been carried out. Should it be required by the EU and national legislation, you must be ready to submit the required documentation to the relevant programme body/ies.

Depending on the choice of investment the partners will seek, whether an assessment of the expected impacts of climate change will be necessary. Should it be necessary it will be submitted prior to start of investment works.

## **Ownership**

Who owns the site where the investment is located?

Cannot be stated at the time of submission of the application (Feb. 2023). However pilot investment must be owned by member organizations (local governments, SMEs or NGOs) of the partner organizations.

Who will retain ownership of the investment at the end of the project?

Owner of the investment (member organizations (local governments, SMEs or NGOs) of the partner organizations.

Who will take care of the maintenance of the investment? How will this be done?

Owner of the investment (member organizations (local governments, SMEs or NGOs) of the partner organizations. It consist ensuring the sustainability and maintenance of the investment and provide all necessary funding for at least five years after project implementation by regularly monitoring, maintaining and using the investments according to its intended use.

## **Investment 1.2**



## Title

Pilot infrastructure investment in Latvia

## Expected delivery period

Period 7, 25 - 28

## Justification

Please explain why this investment is needed.

One of the main challenges of the project is “how to establish environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas in river basins?”

Therefore, besides developing the joint strategy and action plan the partners are interested in setting real life examples (1 in EE and 1 in LV) that address the given challenge in a sustainable manner.

A pilot investment is needed for supporting the project objectives as it allows for the testing and demonstration of the project's solutions and approaches in a real-life setting (1 pilot in Estonia and 1 pilot in Latvia). This enables the partners to validate and refine the project's methodology and to identify potential obstacles that need to be addressed. Additionally, the pilot investment serves as a proof of concept, which can then be replicated in other regions.

Please clearly describe the cross-border relevance of the investment.

Although the exact investment is not selected, the investment is intended to have a cross-border relevance, as:

- it is based on a jointly developed strategy and action plan;
- the final choice regarding the pilot investment is done jointly by the partners;
- the pilot investment will showcase the benefits of cross-border cooperation, i.e. joint development of the strategy and action plan;
- the results of the pilot investment will be promoted on both sides of the border;
- the pilot investment will address the common challenges present on both sides of the border.

Please describe who is benefiting (e.g. partners, regions, end-users, etc.) from this investment, and in what way.

Although the exact investment is not selected, the probable beneficiaries of the investment will include local communities, project partners and their member municipalities, users of the waterways (the River Gauja).

In the case of pilot investment, please clarify which problem it tackles, which findings you expect from it, how it can be replicated, and how the experience coming from it will be used for the benefit of the programme area.

As the investment site will be decided the latest during the period 5 of the project, the exact location and type of the investment is unknown. Therefore, the questions stated above cannot be exactly answered.

However, the pilot investment must correspond to the following criteria:

- The investment must address the second common challenges listed in the section C.2.1.: How to establish environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas in river basins?
- The investment must be located in the protected area.
- The investment must fall under the scope of the joint strategy and action plan.
- The risks related to receiving permissions for installing the investment in time must be minimal.
- The ownership status of the investment site must be clear and transparent.
- The investment must be durable, i.e. last at least 5 years after the project's end.
- It must be possible to replicate the solution in other areas, i.e. it cannot be unique location-specific solution.
- The investment must fit within the planned budget limitations (together with EE investment up to 10% of the total project budget). Partners realize that in case the pilot investment requires more funding, they will cover it form own resources (to ensure that piloting will not be carried out due to insufficiency of funds)

<b>Location of the physical investment</b>	
<b>Country</b>	Latvija (LV)
<b>NUTS 2</b>	Latvija (LV00)
<b>NUTS 3</b>	Pierīga (LV007)
<b>Street House number, Postal code, City</b>	N/A N/A, N/A, Ādaži/Saulkrasti

### **Risk associated with the investment**

Describe the risk associated with the investment, go/no-go decisions, etc. (if any).

The exact risks cannot be listed at the time of submission of the application (Feb. 2023), as the selection of investment is not made yet.

The risks to be associated with the selected investments must be very low and without significant impact on its timely implementation.

### **Investment documentation**

Please list all technical requirements and permissions (e.g. building permits) required for the investment according to the respective national legislation. If these are already available, attach them to this application form, otherwise indicate when you expect them to be available.

The need to acquire technical documentation will be clarified by period 5 (it is expected that such investments require approvals and technical documents). If necessary, the documentation will be submitted the latest during the period 6

For investments in infrastructure with an expected lifespan of at least five years, please indicate whether an assessment of expected impacts of climate change has been carried out. Should it be required by the EU and national legislation, you must be ready to submit the required documentation to the relevant programme body/ies.

Depending on the choice of investment the partners will seek, whether an assessment of the expected impacts of climate change will be necessary. Should it be necessary it will be submitted prior to start of investment works.

### **Ownership**

Who owns the site where the investment is located?

Cannot be stated at the time of submission of the application (Feb. 2023). However pilot investment must be owned by member organizations (local governments, SMEs or NGOs) of the partner organizations.

Who will retain ownership of the investment at the end of the project?

Owner of the investment (member organizations (local governments, SMEs or NGOs) of the partner organizations.

Who will take care of the maintenance of the investment? How will this be done?

Owner of the investment (member organizations (local governments, SMEs or NGOs) of the partner organizations. It consist ensuring the sustainability and maintenance of the investment and provide all necessary funding for at least five years after project implementation by regularly monitoring, maintaining and using the investments according to its intended use.

## C.5 Project Results

Please provide here a description how do the activities of the project contribute to the target value of the relevant programme result indicator.

Result 1	
<b>Programme result indicator</b>	R1.1A: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations
<b>Measurement unit</b>	joint strategy/action plan
<b>Baseline</b>	0,00
<b>Target value</b>	2,00
<b>Describe in more detail the change expected</b>	<p>The activities of the project contribute to the result indicator by creating a joint strategy and action plan for the integrated and sustainable development of the River Gauja and River Emajõgi. Document lay out foundation for a more sustainable and efficient approach to the development of both LAGs territories, leading to an increase in the joint strategies and action plans taken up by organizations.</p> <p>It is expected that local governments, who are members of both LAGs, will integrate relevant approaches from these documents into their local government's strategic documents. The integration of documents into local government strategies will further increase the impact of the project and ensure that the developed solutions are widely adopted and put into practice. The change expected is that these regions will start developing their areas based on the strategic view of the joint strategy and action plan, leading to a more sustainable and efficient approach to development.</p>
Result 2	
<b>Programme result indicator</b>	R1.1B: Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
<b>Measurement unit</b>	solutions
<b>Baseline</b>	0,00
<b>Target value</b>	2,00
<b>Describe in more detail the change expected</b>	These solutions aim to address the challenge of

Result 2	
	<p>establishing environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure in protected areas within the river basins, as well as optimizing the use of natural resources, heritage, and attractions for economic activities.</p> <p>It is expected that the local governments and other member organizations of both LAGs will start implementing these solutions, incorporating them into their own strategic documents, and potentially receiving support from the LAGs through their 2023-2027 integrated regional strategies. The implementation of these solutions will lead to a more sustainable and efficient approach to the development of the territories.</p>

## C.6 Project Time Plan

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	Period 9	After End
<b>WP1</b>	[Orange bar spanning Period 1 to Period 9]									
<i>A1.1 Compilation of the strategy and act...</i>	[Orange bar spanning Period 1 to Period 4]									
<i>A1.2 Study trips to partner regions</i>		[Orange bar spanning Period 2 to Period 3]								
<i>A1.3 Study trip to Finland</i>		[Orange bar spanning Period 2 to Period 3]								
<i>A1.4 Joint networking meetings</i>						[Orange bar spanning Period 6 to Period 8]				
<i>A1.5 Pilot actions implemented in Estoni...</i>					[Orange bar spanning Period 5 to Period 8]					
<i>A1.6 Local trainings</i>						[Orange bar spanning Period 6 to Period 9]				
<i>A1.7 Communication activities</i>	[Orange bar spanning Period 1 to Period 9]									
<i>01.1A</i>				[01.1]						
<i>01.1B</i>							[01.2]			
<i>01.1C</i>									[01.3]	

## C.7 Project management

In addition to the thematic work you will do in your project, you will need time and resources for coordination and internal communication. Please describe below how you plan to organise yourself to ensure the project work runs smoothly.

### C.7.1 Project management system

Please describe the project management system: 1) key positions/groups (as necessary and relevant), 2) number of members per country in every group, 3) tasks of the key positions/groups.

The key positions/groups responsible for the coordination of the project are the following:

- Project Working Group (PWG) with representation of both partners (at least 2-3 persons per partner) will be the main body responsible for coordinating the implementation of the project.
- Project Coordinator (PC) is responsible for overall administrative and financial management of the project, daily management and communication between the project partners, stakeholders, and the JS. PC is leading also the PWG.
- Project Manager (PM) is appointed by LV partner organization and he/she is responsible for coordination of activities, networking and reporting on partner level.
- Strategy and pilot action coordination specialists will be responsible for all the practicalities regarding compilation of the strategy and action plan and implementation of the pilot actions.

PWG will regularly meet at least quarterly (ca 12 times) throughout the project implementation to review implementation of activities, analyse results and problems, assess the risks and prevention measures, compose requests for changes upon need, and set the action plan for upcoming months. These meetings will also be the main tool for internal communication, as the meeting will be attended by the members of PWG and other staff members of the partner organisations involved with specific tasks relevant at the time of a meeting. PWG meetings will be organised mostly in online or hybrid format, but at least twice a year the PWG meetings (6 altogether) will be held in face-to-face format. In addition, to ensure continuous cooperation and communication flow between the PWG meetings regular contacts via email, chatting and other communication tools will be regularly used. If necessary, the partners will agree on additional task-specific meetings.

### C.7.2 Which measures will you take to ensure quality in your project?

Describe specific approaches and processes and responsible partners. If you plan to have any type of project evaluation, please describe its purpose and scope here.

More specifically, the quality management of the project will focus on the following:

- Quality of the project management.
- Quality of the joint strategy and action plan.
- Quality of pilot actions and solutions.
- Quality of promotion activities.

1. The quality of project management will be ensured by the project coordinator, who will make sure that the project will deliver all the foreseen activities, outputs, results and deliverables within the allowed budget and time-frame, and following all the applicable programme and national rules.
2. The quality of the joint strategy and action plan will be ensured based on the experience of both partners with managing strategic planning processes and active engagement of local stakeholders in the development process of the strategy and action plan.
3. The quality of pilot actions and developed solutions will be ensured with the help of involvement of thematic experts during the planning, design, set-up and real-life testing of the pilot actions. The project coordinator will assure that the partner, who is responsible for the specific pilot actions and/ solutions on their territory will engage thematic experts in their implementation process.
4. The quality of promotion activities will be ensured by the coordinating activities of the communication expert. All the project partners have an experience in the production and dissemination of promotion materials, therefore, the communication expert has a task to make use of the common know-how to avoid mistakes and shortcomings of earlier promotion and dissemination activities done by the project partners.

The partners are not planning to carry out any project evaluation(s). However, partners intend to establish the monitoring and evaluation system for assessing the effectiveness of joint integrated strategy and action plan and pilot actions to be implemented within integrated strategy. Partners will jointly and regularly monitor the implementation of strategy and action plan and pilot actions to ensure their usability and efficiency for River Networks territory.



### **C.7.3 What will be the general approach you will follow to communicate about your project?**

Please explain the approach that you will follow when you communicate about your project. How will the project communication be organized and the involvement of partners ensured?

The project communication in line with the visibility requirements of the Estonia – Latvia programme, will be coordinated by the lead partner, supported by the partners from Latvia.

The following communication activities will be implemented throughout the project to promote the upcoming events of the project, results of the project to wider public and ensure widespread visibility and awareness about the project:

- project partners will regularly update their own webpages including the basic information of the project and ongoing/coming project activities news, events and results, etc
- project partners utilise their information channels (LinkedIn, FB, Twitter, Newsletters etc.) which each project partner is already using. Information spread wide scope will gain visibility for the project (new accessibility solutions, results, events etc.);
- distribution of press releases and feature stories related to the achievements or activities of the project, to attract relevant media/press working in the scope of the project;
- making presentations and networking by the partners at thematically relevant external events, conferences, and workshops.

#### **C.7.4 How do you foresee the financial management of the project and reporting procedures for activities and budget (within the partnership and towards the programme)?**

Project will be implemented in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, following its three principles: economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. To lay down the implementation arrangements of the project that guarantee sound financial management the lead partner will sign the partnership agreement with the other partners of the project.

Both project partners are responsible for accurate spending according to their project budget and bookkeeping. The financial management structure will be set-up by the lead partner and the project coordinator will monitor the overall financial administration. Each project partner is responsible for partner-level reporting at the end of each reporting period during the set deadline of 10 working days.

The lead partner is responsible for collecting the controlled and certified partner reports as soon as these are controlled and certified from the partners and compiling the project progress report based on those within 10 working days after receiving the last partner report confirmation. The PC will also communicate the needs for revisions between the JS and partners prior processing of the progress reports. The lead partner will make payments to Latvian project partner after receiving reimbursement from the Estonia - Latvia programme based on the approved costs of each partner. Each partner will have its own appointed person, who will be responsible for the partner's reporting.

The partners will follow the programme specific eligibility rules, national requirements for procurement depending on their legal status and volume of contracts. Partners are also encouraged to implement green procurement rules.

The eligibility criteria and expenditure reporting system and schedule of the Estonia – Latvia Programme will be explained to the staff of the project partners in the beginning of the project and regularly throughout the project to guarantee smooth reporting on partners' level and avoid delays in payments.

Both LAGs have sufficient resources for implementation of project activities as they can use 20% of budget allocated to their integrated strategies for activities toward strengthening their regions.

### C.7.5 Cooperation criteria

Please select all cooperation criteria and describe how you will fulfil them.

Cooperation criteria		Description
Joint development	Yes	<p>The application has been developed in collaboration between the two partners, both involving stakeholders from their territories. The process started with establishing clear communication and setting initial goals, expectations, and strengths of each partner.</p> <p>After setting the initial goals and objectives, the partners continued with determining the specific components of the grant application, including the project activities, budget, and timeline, their role and responsibilities in the project.</p> <p>The development works were carried out through regular online meetings and discussions since autumn 2022.</p>
Joint implementation	Yes	<p>The project will be implemented jointly by the project partners, both contributing to the implementation as equal partners and being responsible for the quality of the project's activities. The partners will plan, implement, and analyse the activities jointly based on the regular coordination work of the project team.</p>
Joint staffing	Yes	<p>Project management team will be formed based on the staff members of both partners. Both partners will contribute to the staffing of the project with their staff members, i.e. the project will be implemented following the principle of joint staffing.</p>
Joint financing	Yes	<p>Project partners carry out the activities, which are financed based on the shared project budget, and according to the budget estimates of respective activities, services, and budget positions. Both partners contribute to the co-financing of the shared project budget.</p>

### C.7.6 Horizontal principles

Please indicate which type of contribution to horizontal principles applies to the project, and justify your choice.

Horizontal principles	Type of contribution	Description of contribution
Sustainable development (including 'do no significant harm' principle)	positive effects	The project has positive contribution to this horizontal principle, as it is based on natural assets and heritage of the programme region, and therefore promotes sustainable use of these resources. When considering do no significant harm principle the project can confirm that all activities will be carried out following that principle. On positive side It will also have an effect to sustainable use and protection of water resources as it is concentrated to sustainable use of riverways.
Equal opportunities and non-discrimination	positive effects	The project will have a positive effect to equal opportunities an non-discrimination as it has very specific community involvement approach allowing all community members to have a voice in selecting best possible strategy for their territory development. As part of stakeholder involvement community members despite of their ability, race, age etc. will be approached (surveys, focus-group interviews, seminars, events. etc.).
Equality between men and women	positive effects	The project will ensure that there will be no distinction between women and men. Access to all project data, activities will be equally provided to all, despite of their gender. Moreover when preparing strategies it is important to ensure the diversity of voice form both men, women and non-binary people. Project will aim to that.

## C.8 Long-term plans

As a programme, we would like to support projects that have a long-lasting effect in the territory and those who will benefit from them. Please describe below what you will do to ensure this.

### C.8.1 Ownership

Please describe who will ensure the financial and institutional support for the outputs/deliverables developed by the project (e.g., tools), and explain how these outputs/deliverables will be integrated in the work of the institutions.

To ensure the financial and institutional support for the outputs/deliverables developed by the River Networks project, the following approach will be taken:

- **Ownership of pilot investments:** pilot investments will be made to LAGs members owned locations (mainly municipality lands) and municipalities will take over the management and sustainability of these investments.
- **Partnership with relevant institutions:** The project partners members are local and regional governments, non-profit organizations, and private sector organizations which will ensure that the outputs/deliverables are integrated into their work and receive ongoing support.
- **Integration into local strategies:** The outputs developed by the project can be integrated into the integrated regional strategies of the Local Action Groups (LAGs) and local government strategies, which will provide a long-term institutional support for the outputs.
- **Capacity building:** The project partners will carry out training and capacity building opportunities for the local and regional institutions to ensure that they have the necessary skills and resources to sustain the outputs beyond the project lifetime.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** The project partners will establish a monitoring and evaluation system to track the use and impact of the outputs and to identify areas for improvement and further support.

By following these strategies, the River Networks project can ensure the financial and institutional support for its outputs and ensure their integration into the work of relevant institutions including partners own work.

### **C.8.2 Durability**

Some outputs/deliverables should be used by relevant groups (project partners or others) after the project's lifetime, in order to have a lasting effect on the territory and the population. Please describe how your outputs/deliverables will be used after the project ends and by whom.

Both partners, who improve objects on their territory with the support of the project will be responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the improved project sites after the project finishes from their own financial resources. This will be done to sustain the functionality of the objects as achieved by the end of the project and to enlarge the scope and number of objects, which follow the principles and solutions established within the project.

This way the project infrastructure investments will also continue to serve as an inspiration for other managers and owners of similar objects in the region.

The overall monitoring for the durability of the project outputs, deliverables and results will be ensured by the LP in cooperation with Latvian project partner.

Durability for implementation of joint solutions will be ensured by integrating these solutions to strategies of LAGs and also strategies of local governments. In more detail, the local strategies to be developed (updated) by local municipalities will integrate solutions into their strategies. LAG local integrated strategies for period 2023-2027 will integrate support for those solutions into their own funded measures ensuring that joint solutions will be implemented on regular basis after project life-time.

### **C.8.3 Transferability**

Some outputs/deliverables that you will deliver could be adapted or further developed to be used by other target groups or in other territories. What will you do to make sure that relevant groups are aware of your outputs/deliverables and are able to use them?

The project team will make sure that relevant target groups, who are not involved in the project as project partners, but could adapt or develop the solutions further, will be aware of the main deliverables of the project - the joint strategy and action plan, results of the pilots actions and jointly developed solutions.

As both partners are LEADER local action groups, they will use national and pan-European network of LEADER LAGs for widespread dissemination of the project's deliverable to increase the probability of transferring the knowledge, experience and solutions.

The partners are ready to consult the interested parties also 1:1 and host site visits from the third parties to make sure that the relevant stakeholders get an access and first-hand information about all the outputs and deliverables of the project.