



D5.1 Plan for Exploitation and Dissemination of Results (PEDR)

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Summary

Effective communication, dissemination, and exploitation are at the forefront of coherently spreading research results. Bridging the gap between science, policy, industry representatives, and the general public, the outreach efforts strive to continuously provide tailored and engaging tools and methods for large-scale engagement with the project's scientific results.

European research projects like SpongeBoost must effectively distribute and promote their findings to ensure a meaningful societal impact. SpongeBoost's communication efforts aim to promote activities and raise awareness. Dissemination ensures that knowledge and results are freely accessible to all beneficiaries. Exploitation focuses on delivering results to stakeholders who can use them for societal, commercial, or political purposes.

The current document, Deliverable D5.1 Plan for Exploitation and Dissemination of Results (PEDR), outlines a strategic plan to guide the project's dissemination, exploitation, and communication (DEC) activities. These efforts are crucial for ensuring the impact of SpongeBoost and are set up as three complementary outreach measures that work together to enhance the project's impact. SpongeBoost's PEDR is established at the early stage of the project in M6 (June 2024) and will be updated in M22 (D5.2) and M46 (D5.3) to reflect the project's progress.

The document begins by detailing the main objectives and scope of the project's communication, dissemination, and exploitation efforts. Based on a consortium-wide survey that took place in May 2024, the strategy proposes key messages for each. It also lists the expected knowledge outputs of the project. Following this, D5.1 elaborates on a specific implementation plan for the SpongeBoost initial stage, including suggested indicators for monitoring the effectiveness of these actions - KPIs. This approach ensures that the communication, dissemination, and exploitation measures are aligned with SpongeBoost's development and impact goals.

List of Abbreviations

DEC	Dissemination, Exploitation, Communication
EU	European Union
HRB	Horizon Results Booster
HRP	Horizon Results Platform
KER	Key Exploitable Result
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PEDR	Plan for Exploitation and Dissemination of Results



1. Introduction

Effective communication and dissemination are essential for SpongeBoost to maximise its impact and ensure sustainable knowledge exchange and adoption of project outcomes. The Plan for the Exploitation and Dissemination of Results (PEDR) utilises partners' extensive outreach and local influence through co-design platforms to guide communication and set benchmarks for evaluating outreach. The main goal of the PEDR is to establish clear objectives and promote interactions between target groups, key messages, and implementation strategies.

This document will be continually updated throughout the project, adapting to new developments and needs to ensure SpongeBoost's communication and dissemination efforts remain effective.

The PEDR outlines specific objectives and detailed actions to achieve these aims. The conducted amongst the project consortia survey is used as a foundation for identifying the strategic goals (how), target audiences (who), core messages and concepts (what) that SpongeBoost seeks to convey. The document explains the connection between these components and showcases the envisioned timeline for implementing these activities (*when*) and indicators for monitoring their effectiveness.

As a comprehensive guide for communication and dissemination within the project, the PEDR offers a roadmap for delivering clear, coordinated, and impactful messages to various stakeholder groups. It also details SpongeBoost's expected outcomes and broader impacts while listing the main tools for engaging key stakeholders and the wider community. These tools include the project website, press releases, newsletters, posters, brochures, social media, meetings, workshops, and scientific publications.

1.1 Objectives

SpongeBoost aims to enhance water retention functions across varying scales, from local to European levels. To achieve this, the project will compile extensive knowledge of sponge functions, creating a comprehensive pan-European database of projects focused on improving landscape sponge capabilities. Innovative water retention solutions will be implemented and tested in diverse case studies, providing practical insights.

The findings from these initiatives will be synthesised into a detailed roadmap for upscaling sponge solutions, facilitating their application from local contexts to a broader European framework. Additionally, SpongeBoost will establish a reliable network to effectively communicate and disseminate the project's results, ensuring widespread impact and engagement with stakeholders.



1.2 Stakeholders

To ensure SpongeBoost's DEC measures are effective, they must be customised for the project's key target groups. These groups were initially outlined in SpongeBoost's description of action (DoA) and further refined through a consortium-wide survey identifying key messages for each group (T1). By integrating expertise in biology, and climate science, SpongeBoost aims to benefit policymakers, the environmental industry, and society at large. The main stakeholder categories are:

- A – Academia (researchers and research institutions);
- P – Policy makers and regulators;
- R – Restoration community;
- L – Local stakeholders (civil society, administration and government);
- WL – Water and Land managers;
- S – Society (citizens and media).

Table 1. SpongeBoost identified stakeholder groups and messages.

Stakeholder groups	Identified subgroups	Key messages
Scientific community (individual scientists, restoration practitioners, research-performing organisations, research societies or networks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universidade Santiago de Compostela, • Universidade da Coruña, • Universidade de Vigo, • Universidad de Zaragoza; • CEDEX Rede Portuguesa de Restauro Ecológico CIIMAR, • CIBIO-InBIO 	SpongeBoost will provide a standardised evaluation of nature-based solutions (NBS).
Regional, National and European administrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Commission, • River Basin Management Commissions • Ministry of Climate (Estonia) • Czech Ministry of Environment • Ministerio de Transición Ecológica y el Reto Demográfico; • Fundación Biodiversidad <p>The list of national and regional administrations is very extensive and includes more</p>	Emphasising the multi-benefit potential of sponges highlights the need for comprehensive policies, tools, incentives, and funding to enable their deployment and scalability. It also stresses the importance of sharing innovative wetland solutions and fostering strategic partnerships to achieve effective governance and management across Europe.



Stakeholder groups	Identified subgroups	Key messages
	than 50 groups from each partner country.	
Water and land managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Board (Estonia) • Confederación Hidrográfica del Ebro; • Confederación Hidrográfica del Miño-Sil; • Augas de Galicia (Demarcación Galicia Costa) • Councils, private owners, public and private companies 	Sponges offer multifaceted benefits, including flood and drought mitigation, water quality enhancement, and biodiversity preservation, effectively aligning with diverse policy objectives; however, challenges may arise in coordinating responsibilities between water boards and municipalities, underscoring the need to empower advocates for sponge wetlands to foster proactive conservation and resource management efforts continent-wide.
Forest managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMK (State Forest Management Centre) Estonia • Horizon project Co-evolvers CHEbro; • CHMiño-Sil; • Xunta de Galicia; • Gobierno de Aragón • Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development - DGADR (central service of the State's direct administration), private owners, Cooperative societies 	Increasing resilience of climate adaptation complementarity of water retention as ecosystem service Empowering forest managers as guardians of sponge wetlands, fostering biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use practices across Europe
Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Private Farming of the CR Mancomunidades de ganaderos; • Asociación agraria de Galicia; • Asociación Nacional de Criadores de Ganado-Vacuno 	Unlocking the potential of wetland sponge ecosystems presents an opportunity to mitigate droughts and floods while empowering farmers as key stewards for fostering resilient agriculture and environmental conservation throughout Europe.



Stakeholder groups	Identified subgroups	Key messages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private owners, • Cooperative societies 	
NGOs (e.g. farmer and conservation) and IGOs (e.g. GBIF, IUCN, IPBES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELF (Estonian Nature Fund) Association of Private Farming of the CR; • Czech Landscape and Garden Society; • Czech green building council SPEA, Quercus 	Enhancing resilience and productivity is paramount, yet it's crucial to acknowledge and manage potential trade-offs.
Local, National and EU policy-makers and decision-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberecký region • Ministerio de Transición Ecológica y Reto Demográfico; • Xunta de Galicia; • Gobierno de Aragón; • Generalitat de Catalunya; • Gobierno de Navarra; • Gobierno de la Rioja 	Restoration efforts drive enhanced sponge functions, which are critical for bolstering water resilience and achieving policy targets, underscoring the indispensable role of healthy wetland ecosystems in mitigating droughts and floods.
Media & general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ekolist.cz Efe Verde; • Ballena Blanca; • Revista Quercus; • Diario de Navarra; • El País; • Europa Press; • LaSexta; • RTVE 	Solutions to floods and droughts, protect property and make people safer Disseminate truthful news about the benefits of restoring sponge wetlands with NbS and fight misinformation.
Civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asafre; • Grupo de afectados por desbordamiento del Ebro en Alfocea; • Plataforma afectados por las inundaciones en Reinosa • Local movements or associations for environmental protection, education, recreation 	Empower civil society to champion sponge wetlands, fostering collective action for biodiversity conservation, environmental restoration, and sustainable development throughout Europe, promoting harmonious coexistence with nature.



Stakeholder groups	Identified subgroups	Key messages
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Institutions • European Investment Bank 	Sponges are investable solutions with measurable impacts for flood and drought reduction.

2. Communication and Dissemination

2.1 Communication

SpongeBoost's communication efforts, the most extensive of its DEC activities, began at the project's inception and will continue beyond its completion. These efforts aim to make the project's results easily accessible and understandable while broadly promoting the project and raising awareness of its mission and goals. Through its communication efforts, SpongeBoost outcomes are presented in an engaging and understandable manner for a broad audience, including the general public, media, and non-specialists. Additionally, they provide opportunities for engagement and dialogue.

The project extends its reach to stakeholders beyond its immediate scope to highlight the significance of upscaling the sponge functions of freshwater ecosystems. To effectively communicate its activities and results, SpongeBoost employs various materials, formats, and channels specifically tailored to each target group's needs.

Communication is intended to be interactive, so partners are encouraged to use personal and institutional channels and seek potential knowledge exchanges with various organisations, networks, and projects. This strategy ensures that SpongeBoost's communication efforts are comprehensive and impactful, while fostering meaningful interactions with a diverse audience.

2.1.1 Communication tools and channels

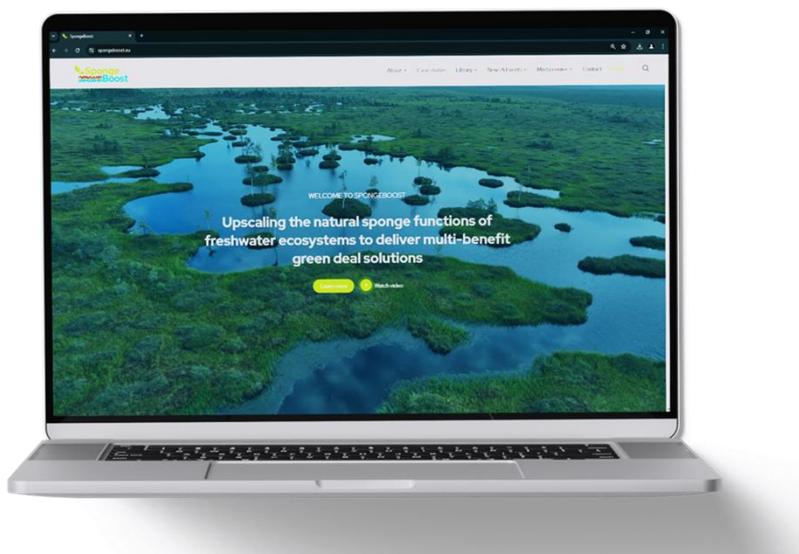
To enhance its effectiveness, SpongeBoost employs a range of one-way and two-way tools and channels to communicate and disseminate the aforementioned outcomes to the identified project stakeholders. Drawing on established best practices in scientific communication, the project also explores emerging opportunities and regularly reviews and updates its toolbox of DEC activities.

2.1.1.1 Website

The SpongeBoost website (Fig.1) (www.spongeboost.eu) acts as a central repository containing all project-related documents, including public deliverables, reports, publications, news updates, promotional materials, and results. It is essential for effective communication and dissemination. The importance of the website as a communication tool is in its capacity to introduce the project to a wide audience using straightforward language that effectively delivers project-derived/relevant information to all its users.



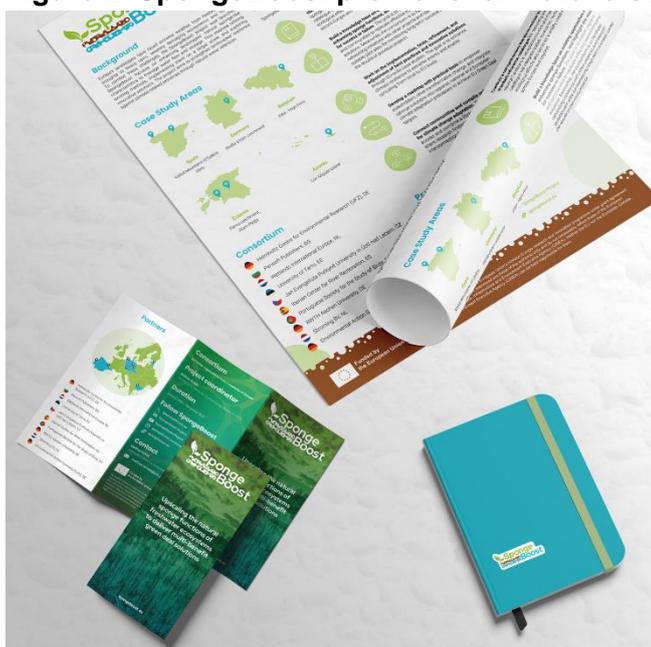
Figure 1. SpongeBoost website.



2.1.1.2 Promotional materials

To widely share its goals, objectives, and progress with stakeholders, SpongeBoost intends to develop various promotional materials (Fig.2) written in accessible language, including an introductory presentation, brochure, poster, and roll-up banner. These materials bolster the project's awareness-raising initiatives by succinctly and visually presenting its activities to stakeholders and other interested parties. Moreover, they facilitate communication and dissemination efforts, as partners are encouraged to distribute them within their networks, utilise them to showcase SpongeBoost at events and meetings, or share them on social media platforms.

Figure 2. SpongeBoost promotional materials.



2.1.1.3 Specialised materials

In addition to its core promotional kit, SpongeBoost will create supplementary informational materials such as leaflets, policy briefs, infographics and fact sheets focused on specific areas of its research. These resources are designed to provide the stakeholders with a thorough understanding of individual research topics in an easily digestible format. By incorporating textual and visual elements, these materials aim to simplify complex or abstract issues. They have been identified as effective tools to communicate various topics, including SpongeBoost's software, modelling approaches, workflows, case studies, and policy alignment efforts.

2.1.1.4 E-newsletter

SpongeBoost will distribute a bi-annual e-newsletter. Apart from serving as a valuable tool to update stakeholders, target groups, and network members on the latest project developments and progress, it also serves as an engaging means of strengthening SpongeBoost's identity beyond the project's scope. The e-newsletter adheres to SpongeBoost's established visual identity, ensuring easy recognition for the reader. The e-newsletter audience is subscription-based and will expand as the project evolves over the coming years.

2.1.1.5 Press release

To enhance public awareness of its significant updates, SpongeBoost will issue press releases to two prominent science news portals: **EurekAlert!** and **AlphaGalileo**. These press releases serve as a means of communicating project-related information and aid in dissemination efforts by broadcasting the project's findings to a broad audience of potential users. In addition to these two established media channels, project partners express interest in publishing press releases through their respective institutions. SpongeBoost is also open to incorporating this practice into its communication strategy. Beyond engaging with well-known media channels, the project will collaborate with local, regional, national, and European platforms.

2.1.1.6 SpongeBoost SuperHero

To support the upscaling of innovative solutions, SpongeBoost will implement a creative communications approach featuring a character called the "SpongeBooster superhero." This character will simplify complex concepts through engaging visuals and inspiring stories, shaping the project's visual identity and making the sponge narrative fun and accessible to both experts and non-experts. The superhero will be depicted in various key illustrations, which will be regularly featured in project materials. To maintain consistent interest, SpongeBoost will establish a "SpongeBooster of the Month" award, promoted through social media, interviews, short videos, and an annual "SpongeBooster of the Year" award. The "SpongeBooster of the Year" will be chosen by a jury and awarded the SpongeBooster Trophy during a field trip, organised in collaboration with WP4 and WP3 as a networking and capacity-building event, along with regional press coverage.



2.2. Dissemination

Dissemination activities within European projects aim to freely share knowledge and findings with any stakeholder who can benefit, including scientists, industry, public authorities, policy-makers, and civil society. SpongeBoost's dissemination efforts will start as soon as results are available and last up to four years beyond the project's completion. SpongeBoost adopts an open-access policy, ensuring publications, research data, and tools are accessible through open-access platforms.

Incorporating potential users into co-development is an essential part of dissemination, which will be achieved through an Advisory Board of Stakeholders (ABS). Local implementation of Living Lab methods within the demonstration sites will facilitate this process.

Furthermore, the database on restoration projects, established in WP2, will significantly enhance dissemination across restoration networks, expanding SpongeBoost's impact beyond its initial scope.

2.2.1 Dissemination actors

Pensoft, as the leader of WP5, will be responsible for developing, implementing and navigating the dissemination efforts of SpongeBoost during the project's duration. As the dissemination leader Pensoft will:

- Coordinate and monitor all dissemination activities;
- Organise dissemination activities on all project levels;
- Encourage partners to initiate and participate;
- Reach out and establish working contacts with relevant activities;
- Ensure regular quality content for the various dissemination channels within this strategy.

While organising and foreseeing the dissemination activities within the project, Pensoft will additionally frequently plan various social media strategies, aiming to increase the project's network while presenting a strong social media presence.

To ensure the broadest impact and highest level of dissemination, all partners will be actively engaged in the dissemination process, using their personal and/or institutional networks and websites to promote the project. Moreover, the consortium members are encouraged to participate in relevant conferences and meetings to present the project and its results and distribute dissemination materials.

2.2.2 Dissemination tools and channels

SpongeBoost is committed to making its findings widely accessible to both potential users and the scientific community. Dissemination will start as soon as results are available, using traditional and modern methods. One-way dissemination will follow an open-access (OA) policy, publishing in high-impact OA journals and utilising a trustworthy repository. Project datasets will also be shared in established repositories.



In terms of two-way dissemination, the project will collaborate with networks, initiatives, and intergovernmental bodies to exchange best practices and enhance visibility through joint activities such as workshops, webinars, press releases, and social media campaigns. Policy-makers will receive concrete recommendations via policy briefs and webinars building on the knowledge gathered in the project's case studies.

2.2.2.1 Scientific publications

SpongeBoost will, whenever possible, follow an open-access (OA) policy for scientific publications, tools, maps, and other outcomes. This includes using gold and utilising recognised public repositories, such as Zenodo, for archiving data and related process descriptions. Detailed information on data management practices can be found in D6.3 Data Management Plan (DMP).

SpongeBoost will also consider opening a project collection in an open-access journal, such as the Research Ideas and Outcomes (RIO) journal, to broaden the reach of its scientific outputs. Moreover, SpongeBoost will publish research findings in the "Restoration of Wetlands" collection in the Nature Conservation journal (D5.5). The project will expand the collection to cover sponge functions of landscapes and nature-based solutions to adapt to climate change.

The topical collection "Restoration of Wetlands" within the journal consolidates extensive experience from science, policy, and hands-on restoration of wetlands and coastal marine systems, fostering interdisciplinary exchange. SpongeBoost intends to expand this collection to encompass sponge functioning within landscapes and its role as a nature-based solution to climate change adaptation. Ultimately, Nature Conservation will host a comprehensive collection of all project outcomes as reusable, openly accessible, and citable publications beyond the project's lifespan.

2.2.2.2 Events

To disseminate its findings and engage with the scientific community and other stakeholders, SpongeBoost members plan to actively participate and showcase the project at various international events and conferences. How SpongeBoost will be represented at each event will be decided on a case-by-case basis, considering the nature of the event and the available project results. Potential options include sharing project outcomes through oral presentations in relevant sessions, submitting abstracts and scientific posters, giving invited talks, or engaging with interested stakeholders through one-on-one meetings during the events.

In the initial six months, SpongeBoost partners participated in several events, including the Free Flow Conference, Green Sponges for Water & Climate Resilience event during the EU Green Week, the 7th European Congress of Conservation Biology, and the 3rd World Biodiversity Forum.

Upcoming events that have been identified as suitable for SpongeBoost participation include the GfÖ Annual Conference, the 5th European Conference of the Ecosystem Services Partnership, TERRAenVISION, the European Conference on Ecological Restoration and more.



In addition, three events are planned as part of the Sponge Booster of the Year field trips and excursions. The project's results will also be shared with local stakeholders during these events.

2.2.2.3 Collaboration with other projects and initiatives

SpongeBoost is to organise and participate in joint workshops, webinars, press releases and other types of exchanges in order to build synergies with existing networks, initiatives, universities, research institutes, intergovernmental bodies and other relevant research projects. They aim to promote collaboration, integration and cooperation by exchanging best practices and increasing visibility. The project focuses on the organisations, networks and projects listed below:

- [ALFAwetlands](#)
- [EKLIPSE](#)
- [REST-COAST](#)
- [eLTER](#)
- [ETC-BE](#)
- [LAND4FLOOD](#)
- [MERLIN](#)
- [SCALES](#)
- [WaterLANDS](#)
- [SpongeScapes](#)
- [OPTAIN](#)
- [Natural Sponges](#)

3. Exploitation Plan

Once concrete results become available, DEC activities will focus on other concrete applications for commercial, societal and policy support purposes. To enhance the exploitation of the project's findings, SpongeBoost will engage in a continuous and in-depth dialogue with stakeholders, involving them in a co-design process and leveraging their unique expertise. Target groups are invited to interact with and review SpongeBoost's results via online working groups, workshops, webinars, and other project events, which will be elaborated in more depth in the PEDR update (M22, D5.2 and M46, D5.3).

Additionally, SpongeBoost will utilise the EC's Horizon Result Platform (HRP) to announce and highlight key exploitable results to investors, stakeholders, politicians, potential business partners, and other interested parties.

Beyond the HRP, SpongeBoost will use the Horizon Results Booster (HRB) to enhance exploitation efforts. HRB proposes clustering projects for joint dissemination, improved exploitation plans, business plans for research and innovation outcomes, and commercialisation services for mature results.

In the study sites, SpongeBoost will translate fact sheets, videos, guidelines, and region-specific story maps for distribution via social media, project websites, living-lab activities, and press releases to reach a broader audience with the project's findings.



The SpongeBoost project is committed to delivering a variety of outcomes to maximise its exploitation efforts. These include developing comprehensive guidelines for practitioners (WP4) on best practices for assessing the potential and multifunctional benefits of sponges. Additionally, policy briefs will be developed and widely disseminated to provide valuable, evidence-based recommendations, supporting several EU missions such as the Green Deal mission and the recently adopted Nature Restoration Law.

Furthermore, active collaboration will be established with the SpongeBoost sister project, SpongeScapes, as well as with other existing projects and initiatives. This will ensure that the project's results are effectively utilised by both current and future projects. Lastly, available data from previous research actions will be utilised as much as possible whenever relevant.

3.1. Key Exploitable Results

SpongeBoost strongly emphasises its Pathways to Impact in its communication and dissemination strategy. It recognises the critical role of Key Exploitable Results (KERs) (T2) and Expected Outcomes in achieving project goals. Therefore, all outreach efforts are focused on clearly communicating these results to relevant target groups and stakeholders. It is important to note that this information is based on the initial data gathered and is the first version. As the project progresses, the information will continue to be updated and refined as needed.

Table 2. SpongeBoost Key Exploitable Results (KERs) and their potential users.

Result	Potential Users
State-of-the-art knowledge collation on sponge function for climate change adaptation: sponge potential, multifunctional benefits and best practice approaches and innovative solutions	Academia Policymakers and regulators Restoration community Water and Land managers
Prototyped methodology for post-restoration monitoring	Policymakers and regulators Academia Local stakeholders
Innovative approaches to assess the sponge potential under climate change	Academia Restoration community Water and Land managers
Recommendation for policy-makers to support strengthening the enabling policy environment for improving the sponge function of landscapes as a mean of climate change adaptation	Policymakers and regulators Local stakeholders
Prototype roadmap for supporting and implementing innovative solutions to improve the sponge functioning of landscape	Restoration community Water and Land managers Local stakeholders Policymakers and regulators Academia



Result	Potential Users
Topical collection on sponge functioning of landscapes and as a nature-based solution to adapt to climate change as an expansion to a topical collection on the restoration of wetlands in the journal Nature Conservation as reusable, openly accessible, citable publications and knowledgebase that can be continuously be updated by the whole restoration community well beyond the project's lifetime	Academia Restoration community Water and Land managers Policymakers and regulators Local stakeholders

4. Social media strategy

The European Commission recognises social media as an effective tool for communication and dissemination in EU-funded R&I projects (EC, 2020, p.4). Consequently, SpongeBoost has developed a social media strategy outlining the project's use of various social networks. This strategy aims to engage relevant stakeholders in project activities and promptly disseminate results to maximise their uptake.

4.1. Social media platforms

SpongeBoost carefully curated its selection of social media platforms, opting to focus on those that offer the greatest outreach potential rather than trying to be present on every network. Choosing the right social networks is challenging due to the many available options and various factors to consider. Therefore, the following questions guided the selection process:

- Are project members active on this social network?
- Are stakeholders engaged on this social network?
- Does this channel have a large and active audience?
- Do we have the expertise to manage an account on this platform?
- Can we effectively measure and report results from this channel?

After evaluating these criteria, SpongeBoost identified three networks (T.3) that met all the requirements:

- X (previously Twitter): @spongeboost_eu
- LinkedIn: SpongeBoost Project
- Instagram: @spongeboost_horizoneurope



Table 3. Comparison between advantages and disadvantages of the three chosen social media channels.

Channel	Advantages	Disadvantages
X (previously Twitter)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable for reporting live from events • Easy to start discussions • High number of users • Fast and easy communication • Easy to track events & news through hashtags • Diverse analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential loss of followers due to people switching focus to other platforms • Big amount of content • Requires very regular Content • Limited characters
LinkedIn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional focus • Inspirational and leadership-focused content • Potential to target industry stakeholders • No character limitations • The majority of consortium members have LinkedIn accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big focus on job search • Building a wide network is a time-consuming process • Fewer interaction types, such as polls
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting with the younger audience • Supports images and videos • Hashtags are useful for targeting specific campaigns • Creation of polls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not suitable for sharing links • Harder to target our specific audience as Instagram has become unpredictable • Would need people to be redirected to our Instagram account via other media channels to boost the attention

4.2. Social media campaigns

To ensure that SpongeBoost's social media efforts are targeted, customised, and quantifiable, a detailed editorial calendar featuring specific social media campaigns has been crafted (T.4). Aligned with the project's Implementation plan, the Initial stage focuses on introducing SpongeBoost's various aspects to a broader audience. As such, the following social media campaigns have been identified to cater to specific target groups:



Table 4. SpongeBoost’s planned social media campaigns for the first stage of the project duration.

Name	Hashtag	Description
Meet the SpongeBoost institutions campaign	#SpongeBoostPartners	This campaign has already been completed. It aimed to introduce the 10 partner organisations and some essential information about them.
Meet the project campaign	#SpongeBoostFacts	This campaign presents the key facts about SpongeBoost in order for stakeholders to get to know the project.
Meet the people behind the project campaign	#SpongeBoostFaces	The campaign introduces project members and their individual expertise.
Previous Research campaign	#PreviousResearchof-SpongeBoosters	This campaign showcases relevant research conducted by partners prior to the beginning of SpongeBoost.
Case Studies campaign	#SpongeBoostSites	This campaign highlights the project’s case study areas.
Sponge Booster of the month	#Sponge-Boosterofthemoth	This campaign will introduce partners and showcase the people, projects, and stories behind the recipients across the project's various channels. This campaign shall begin at an earlier project stage and will encompass over the whole project duration.

The first completed social media campaign, [#SpongeBoostPartners](#) (Fig.3), was designed to introduce the project's partner institutions. Consisting of 12 posts, including an introduction and conclusion, it garnered over 4,000 impressions on both LinkedIn and X platforms, marking a successful launch for the project's social media presence. As SpongeBoost progresses, additional social media campaigns will be developed and incorporated into the PEDR update in M22.



Figure 3. SpongeBoost's first social media campaign - #SpongeBoostPartners.

5. Implementation Plan

SpongeBoost's implementation plan, outlined below, includes the project's communication, dissemination, and exploitation tools, the targeted stakeholder groups, and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to assess their effectiveness. This plan is structured into three stages (Fig.4), guided by two main considerations:

1. The project's maturity level, recognising that each stage requires a distinct focus for DEC activities.
2. Anticipated updates to the Plan for the Exploitation and Dissemination of Results (PEDR) at M22, M46, enabling WP5 to evaluate the progress and efficiency of DEC tools and channels. This evaluation will be based on an in-depth analysis and surveys within the consortium and wider audiences, and will serve to inform the identification of new KPIs relevant to the subsequent stages of the project's evolution.



Figure 4. SpongeBoost maturity stages.

Stage 1: Introduction (M1-M18) - In this initial stage, the project's primary emphasis will be on raising awareness, cultivating an organic network, performing stakeholder mapping activities, and finally, introducing local audiences to the project's demonstration sites.

Stage 2: Unfolding (M19-M34) - Within the second stage of SpongeBoost, communication and dissemination efforts will shift towards showcasing specific project outcomes. Active engagement with the identified stakeholders will also take place during this period to sustain and enhance the established contacts during the first stage. Simultaneously, there will be a focus on assessing the impact of the undertaken communication and dissemination initiatives through the collection and analysis of feedback from the network.

Stage 3: Maturity (M35-M48) -- During the final phase of the communication and dissemination plan, priority will be given to facilitating the utilisation of SpongeBoost results. Additionally, this stage will involve extensive participation in and coordination of diverse conferences, workshops, and co-design events. One of the initial objectives of WP5 is M17 - the organisation of the SpongeBoost Final Conference in M46. A comprehensive assessment of the impact of communication and dissemination efforts will be carried out, alongside considerations for the project's lasting legacy.

Hence, D5.1 includes comprehensive KPIs (T.5) for the initial (Introduction) phase of the project, focusing on effectively initiating project activities, increasing awareness, and establishing a SpongeBoost community. When revising the PEDR, a supplementary table will outline the pertinent KPIs for the subsequent stage.



Table 5. SpongeBoost Key Performance Indicators covering Stage 1 of the project development.

Channel	Type of DEC activity	Target group	Key performance indicators
SpongeBoost Website	C & D	All	No. visits >3,000, Average session duration >120s, Returning visitors >30%; Distribution: EU & beyond
Social media networks (LinkedIn, X, Instagram)	C & D	All	Posts>1/week; re-tweets/reposts (X/LinkedIn) >1/week; followers/ subscribers & “likes” >+100; >50 000 impressions
Promotional materials	C	All	3 materials produced; >600 downloads from the website; utilised at 10 events
Video	C & D	A, R, P, L, WL	2 videos produced; ≥ 100 views/video
Coordinated press releases	C & D	All	≥ 2 press releases issued during the project; no. of downloads/visits >1500/press release
Newsletters	C & D	All	4 newsletters; no. of subscribers + 50/year, no. of opens >50%
Scientific publications	D	A, R	Number of peer-reviewed publications > 3
Presentations at policy-related, practitioner and scientific events and conferences	D	A, P, R	>10 international & national events where the project was presented
Guidelines for practitioners	D & E	R, L	3 guidelines for practitioners published on the project website
Joint activities with sister project/s	C & D	All	>3 activities completed
Joint workshops & webinars with sister and other projects	D & E	All	N/A for this stage of the project
Policy briefs	D & E	All	N/A for this stage of the project
Training activities & tutorial materials	D & E	All	N/A for this stage of the project



Channel	Type of DEC activity	Target group	Key performance indicators
Living Labs	D & E	R, L	N/A for this stage of the project
Mid-term and final conference	C & D & E	A, P, R, WL	N/A for this stage of the period

6. Outlook

In summary, SpongeBoost's PEDR provides a clear and concise roadmap for guiding the project's dissemination, exploitation, and communication efforts. It establishes practical connections between the project's outcomes, target audiences, and the selected outreach strategies. The PEDR also outlines a detailed implementation plan, specifying the timing of actions and how their effectiveness will be assessed. To ensure the continued relevance and impact of SpongeBoost's DEC activities throughout the project, the PEDR will be updated in month 22. This update will evaluate the performance of activities conducted thus far, identify areas for improvement, and introduce new KPIs to measure effectiveness in the second stage of the project.



7. References

European Commission. (2020). H2020 Programme: Guidance Social media guide for EU funded R&I projects. EC, 07.01.2020.

https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/grants_manual/amqa/soc-med-guide_en.pdf

