

HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-10  
Grant Agreement No 101094340

## ForestValue2

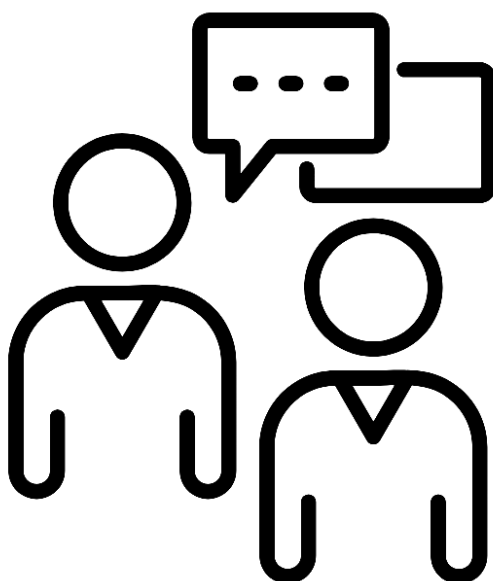
Innovating forest-based bioeconomy

HORIZON Coordination and Support Actions

### T.5.4.2 – Guidelines for communication

for projects funded under the Joint Call 2023

with aim to support effective communication activities with different target audiences



Dissemination level		
PU	Public, fully open	X
SEN	Sensitive, limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement	



Funded by  
the European Union

## Version history

Version	Date	Author/Reviewers	Partner	Description
0.1	26. 9. 2024	Katja Žagar, Karmen Jereb Bren	MVZI	WP5
0.2	26. 9. 2024	Mika Kallio	MMM	WP1 Lead

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## Executive summary

These guidelines are designed to help researchers and scientists improve a critical aspect of their work: effectively communicating science and research to audiences beyond the specialized scientific community. While scientists are traditionally trained to think critically, ask challenging questions, and rigorously test hypotheses, they often lack formal training in sharing their work with non-specialists. **To address this gap**, these guidelines offer tools and strategies to enhance the clarity and impact of scientific communication.

With each passing year, the focus on developing better communication practices becomes increasingly important. This document specifically supports the dissemination efforts of all projects funded under the Joint Call 2023, encouraging researchers to continually refine and adapt their communication approaches. By fostering stronger connections with broader audiences, these guidelines aim to ensure that scientific findings are accessible, engaging, and impactful for a diverse range of stakeholders.

## 1. Introduction

The objective of Task 5.4.2 – Preparation of Guidelines for communication activities to support effective communication and dissemination of results are guidelines for communication activities that are prepared and offered to all projects funded under the joint call 2023, with aim to support effective communication activities with different target audiences (research, academia, funders, industry, policy makers).

The ForestValue2 Joint Call 2023 represents a significant initiative aimed at advancing sustainable forest management and fostering innovation within the bioeconomy. Communication plays a crucial role in ensuring the success of this project by facilitating the exchange of knowledge, engaging a wide range of stakeholders, and disseminating the results effectively.

Communication within the funded projects under ForestValue2 framework goes beyond mere dissemination. It involves a dynamic exchange of information that is aimed at achieving strategic goals through targeted engagement with different audiences, including researchers, academia, industry, policymakers, and the general public. This approach ensures that the project's outcomes not only reach the intended audience but also **generate meaningful impact**.

Communication Guidelines are a set of principles and recommendations that help you plan, design, and deliver effective and engaging communication of your research results to different audiences and stakeholders. Communication Guidelines can help you:

- Increase the visibility and impact of your research
- Build trust and credibility with your funders and partners
- Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange among researchers and practitioners
- Enhance public awareness and understanding of forest-based bioeconomy
- Support the implementation of the European Green Deal

## 2. What is communication of research results?

What is communication of research results or research communication? Research communication is a catch-all term for **sharing knowledge beyond traditional academic audiences**. Posting on social media is research communication. Writing an op-ed is research communication. Talking to your kids about your research work is research communication.

Communication of research results is the **process of sharing** and disseminating your research findings to different audiences, such as academics, policy makers or the public. The purpose of communication is to increase the visibility, impact, and usefulness of your research, as well as to foster dialogue and collaboration with relevant stakeholders. Communication of research results can involve various methods and channels, such as publications, presentations, media, social media, blogs, videos, events, infographics, etc.

Effective communication requires **creating clear, concise, and tailored messages** for your target audience, and using appropriate formats and styles to convey your main points. Communication of research results is an essential and ethical part of conducting research, and should be planned and implemented throughout the research cycle.

Effective communication of research results is crucial for maximizing the impact of ForestValue2 funded projects. These guidelines aim to ensure clear, consistent, and impactful dissemination of findings to relevant stakeholders.

### 3. Objectives of Communication Activities

**Raise Awareness:** Increase the visibility of the project's goals, progress, and outcomes among key stakeholders, including researchers, policymakers, industry leaders, and the general public.

**Facilitate Knowledge Exchange:** Promote the sharing of knowledge within the consortium and with external stakeholders, ensuring that the project's results are widely disseminated and utilized.

**Engage Stakeholders:** Actively involve stakeholders in the project, gathering feedback and fostering collaboration to ensure that the project's activities align with their needs and expectations.

**Promote Adoption of Results:** Encourage the adoption of the project's findings by policymakers, industry, and academia, supporting the integration of sustainable practices into forestry management and the bioeconomy.

## 4. Communication and Dissemination Plan

Whilst each Communication and Dissemination Plan is different, it is likely to consist of:

- a narrative (the rationale/ approach),
- a table which draws together information on priority target audiences, the key tailored messages for each targeted audience, methods (channels, styles, material, activities) to reach the audiences,
- a timetable/GANTT chart when you will reach out to the targeted audiences,
- a budget table with enough detail on each action/activity/product and its delivery,
- a table pulling together the agreed key performance indicators or measures of success against each planned for activity.

The elements of a Communication Plan that demonstrate clarity of thought and planning include:

- Evidence that the whole Consortium is ‘on board’ with the plan and that all partners will support the actions.
- Focus on purpose/objective of each selected dissemination/communication action – Who is it for? What do we want to happen as a result?
- Clarity on the messages that the project wishes to communicate overall and to specific groups.
- Clear understanding of what success looks like for each action.
- Description of the method to be used for delivery.
- Utilization of resources and talents within the consortium.
- Realistic assessment of the potential impact of each action.
- Built-in time points for review and adjustment.
- Appropriate focus on internal communications within the Consortium.

The Plan should be able to answer the following questions clearly:

- What are the objectives of our Communication Plan?
- Who are our priority target audiences and why?
- When is the most appropriate time to engage with each audience and why?
- How does our Communication Plan create synergy with the rest of the project plan?
- How do we justify the budget allocated to each of our proposed communications actions?
- How are we splitting responsibility for the resources and actions across the Consortium?

### **A Sample Approach to a Stakeholder Table (key part of any communication plan)**

**The issue:** we need to ensure that more young people know how to code

**Why:** to improve their personal employment prospects

**Impact:** overall economic benefit

Communication Plan – Priority Stakeholders & Actions				
Priority Stakeholder Group	What message/info	How to communicate?	When?	Success measures
Priority 1: Policy players in Education & Business	Resources required for upper schools to deliver next	- Create Consensus White Paper to present to Ministers and special Committees	From Day One – complete by end of Year One	Number of one on one meetings  Questions in Parliament



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	generation of IT stars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secure political Ambassadors</li> <li>- One on one briefing meetings</li> <li>- Articles in business press</li> </ul>		Media coverage
Priority 2: Head-teachers/ Governors/ Proprietors of colleges	Need trained teachers to deliver the training required plus 'Train the Trainers facilities'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Articles in the specialist education media</li> <li>- Identify and contribute to LinkedIn groups</li> <li>-Attend/speak at specialist meetings</li> <li>-Create database of interested parties &amp; send occasional</li> </ul>	Years One & Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of active enquirers (no on database)</li> <li>New courses set up</li> <li>Evidence of internal cascade of issue/action</li> <li>Active recruitment &amp; allocation of resources</li> <li>Capture of success stories for use in newsletter</li> <li>Media coverage</li> </ul>
Priority 3: Teachers of students 14 -18	Become active in a new area of teaching – professional opportunity  Training available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Articles in teacher press</li> <li>-Social media activity: LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.</li> </ul>	Years Two & Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pick up of places on training courses</li> <li>Appointments in schools / colleges</li> </ul>
Priority 4: Students 14-18	Coding is cool  See what you can do with it – it's fun but it can be profitable too  Demand that you are given resources and guidance to help yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Recruit student ambassadors who can code</li> <li>-Let them loose to use social media/channels as they choose (provide resources if needed)</li> <li>-Support with an event – Coding Convention template (to be taken up in many places) with col coding paraphernalia</li> <li>-Create matching events for students with business to demo relevance to lives/future prospects</li> </ul>	Year Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of active ambassadors with 'followers'</li> <li>Number of new students learning code</li> <li>Number of successful Conventions &amp; matching events</li> </ul>

## 5. Target Audiences

- Identify **key stakeholders** including policymakers, researchers, industry professionals, forest managers, environmental organizations, and the general public
- **Tailor** communication strategies to each audience segment to ensure relevance and engagement.

Audience	Key Messages	Channels
<b>Researchers and Academia</b>	Focus on the scientific and innovative aspects of the project, promoting collaboration and research.	Academic journals, conferences, workshops
<b>Policymakers</b>	Highlight the policy implications of the project's findings, advocating for sustainable practices.	Policy briefs, stakeholder meetings
<b>Industry and Business</b>	Emphasize the economic benefits and practical applications of the project's results.	Industry reports, case studies, newsletters
<b>General Public</b>	Raise awareness about the importance of sustainable forestry and the bioeconomy.	Social media, public events, educational campaigns

## 6. Communication Channels and Tools

- Utilize a diverse range of communication channels such as websites, social media, press releases, newsletters, scientific publications, webinars, and conferences.
- Ensure that selected mediums are accessible to diverse audiences and comply with open access principles whenever possible.

### 6.1. Digital Channels

**Website:** The project website will serve as the central hub for all project-related information, including news, events, and resources.

**Social Media:** Platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube will be used to share updates, insights, and key findings from the research project, engage with the public, and promote events. Use hashtags and multimedia content to increase visibility and engagement. Don't just tell what you are doing, tell what it means for citizens, work with examples.

**Email Newsletters:** Regular newsletters will keep stakeholders informed about the project's progress and upcoming activities.

**Webinars and Online Workshops:** These virtual events will provide opportunities for in-depth discussions and knowledge sharing.

**Storytelling:** Use storytelling techniques to convey the impact of the research project in a compelling and relatable manner. Share stories of individuals or communities affected by the research findings to humanize the project and resonate with the audience.

**Content marketing:** Create and distribute informative and engaging content such as blog posts, articles, videos, and podcasts that highlight the relevance and significance of the research project. Share content through owned channels and partner networks to expand reach.

### 6.2 Traditional Channels

**Print Publications:** Brochures, policy briefs, and reports will be distributed at events and meetings.

**Conferences and Seminars:** Presentations at relevant conferences will help disseminate the project's findings to a targeted audience.

**Media Relations:** Press releases and media briefings will ensure coverage of the project in relevant outlets. Issue press releases to announce major milestones, significant findings, or upcoming events related to the research project. Distribute press releases to relevant media outlets and online platforms to reach a broader audience. Cultivate relationships with journalists

and media professionals who cover topics related to the research project. Offer expert interviews, exclusive access to researchers, and story ideas to generate media coverage.

## 7. Content Development and Messaging

- Craft concise and **clear messages** highlighting the significance, outcomes, and potential impact of the research.
- Emphasize alignment with the objectives of the European Green Deal and the advancement of the European Research Area.
- Showcase the contributions of ForestValue2 funded projects towards promoting sustainable forest management and the bioeconomy.

### 7.1 Key Messages

**Sustainability:** 'Promoting sustainable forest management for a thriving bioeconomy.'

**Innovation:** 'Driving forward innovative solutions in forestry and the bioeconomy.'

**Collaboration:** 'Bringing together diverse expertise for impactful results.'

**Impact:** 'Creating tangible benefits for society, the environment, and the economy.'

### 7.2 Content Creation Process

**Planning:** Identify the purpose, audience, and key messages for each piece of content.

**Development:** Create content that is clear, engaging, and aligned with the project's objectives.

**Review:** Ensure all content is reviewed by relevant stakeholders before dissemination.

**Distribution:** Choose the most appropriate channels for reaching the target audience.

## 8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Implement mechanisms for monitoring the effectiveness of communication strategies and adjusting them as needed.
- Collect feedback from stakeholders to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and usefulness of communication materials.
- To measure the effectiveness of the communication strategy, a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used:

KPI	Target	Measurement Tool
Website Traffic	Increase by 20% over the next 6 months	Google Analytics
Social Media Engagement	50 new followers on social media (LinkedIn, Twitter) in 12 months	Social media analytics tools
Newsletter Open Rate	Achieve an open rate of 30%	Email marketing software
Stakeholder Feedback	Positive feedback from 80% of participants	Surveys and feedback forms

*Regular reports will be generated to track these KPIs, and adjustments to the communication strategy will be made as needed to improve outcomes.*

## 9. Content Alignment and Collaboration

- Maintain consistency in branding across all communication materials to reinforce the identity and credibility of ForestValue2 funded projects.
- One EU logo is necessary when communicating in Horizon Europe: **the EU flag**. A small text “Funded by the European Union” is also necessary. This is stated in Art. 17 of the Annotated Model Grant Agreement of Horizon Europe.
- Use the official ForestValue2 logo, colors, and visual elements in all promotional materials and publications. In the context of public presentations of your ForestValue2 project, we ask you to use the following acknowledgement quote:  
*“Project [Project Acronym] is supported under the Horizon Europe CSA ForestValue2 by [list of all national agencies supporting the project]. ForestValue2 has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement N°101094340.”*
- For your potential use of the ForestValue2 logo, you can download it [here](#).
- For being informed about ongoing activities, events, call updates etc., please subscribe to [ForestValue2 Newsletter](#).
- In the context of the use of social media, we invite you to participate actively on two networks: LinkedIn and Twitter > ForestValue2
- ForestValue2 does not offer generic templates for reports, PowerPoint presentations, or Word documents, as we encourage each project to showcase its unique graphic identity. We believe that creativity plays a vital role in effectively promoting each funded project.

### 9.1 Annual and final reports

- In addition to the standard requirements of your funding agency, in order to evaluate the progress and to assess the outputs of the projects the following reports are required:  
Mid-term report (confidential with publishable summary),  
Final report (with publishable part).
- For gathering the required follow-up reports, you will be directly contacted by the respective Work package Manuel Sanchez (AEI).

### 9.2 Project presentations in connection with follow-up seminars

- At least two follow-up seminars are planned for the co-funded projects: a kick-off seminar and a final seminar. Additionally, there is the possibility of organizing a mid-term seminar if necessary.
- Representatives from funded consortia are requested to participate and represent their projects. For gathering the required presentations, you will be directly contacted by the ForestValue2 Call Office.
- Furthermore, the involved researchers are encouraged to actively exploit the results of the research project and make them available for use, whether for commercial gain or not, in order for public benefit to be obtained from the knowledge created. The funded projects are also encouraged to arrange focused joint workshops with thematically related projects.

**Branding Guidelines:** All communication materials should be ensuring a cohesive visual identity. It might be smart to invest the printing funds into a professional designer and turn your posters, brochures into high end material, with good layouts, appealing graphics, well written short texts and effective photos to use online.

**Content Sharing:** Coordinantor of funded project, or assigned partner, will share content and resources to ensure consistency and maximize impact.

**Collaboration Tools:** Use of online collaboration platforms (e.g., Google Drive, Slack) to facilitate content development and review.



## 10. Stakeholder Engagement Strategies

- Foster **active engagement** with stakeholders through interactive platforms, workshops, seminars, and stakeholder meetings.
- Encourage two-way communication by soliciting feedback, questions, and suggestions from stakeholders.

**Workshops and Focus Groups:** These shall be used to gather input and feedback from stakeholders, helping to shape the project's activities.

**Stakeholder Meetings:** Regular meetings should be held to update stakeholders and discuss their concerns.

**Feedback Mechanisms:** Surveys and feedback forms could be distributed to capture stakeholder opinions and improve communication efforts.

## 11. Other

**Visual Representation:** Use visual aids such as infographics, charts, and diagrams to enhance understanding and retention of key findings. Visuals can make complex information more accessible and engaging.

**Language and Accessibility:** Use clear and jargon-free language to enhance accessibility for a broad audience. Avoid technical terms or explain them when necessary. Provide translations or summaries in multiple languages to reach stakeholders across participating countries.

**Timing and Frequency:** Plan communication activities strategically to coincide with project milestones, major findings, and relevant policy discussions. Maintain regular updates and communications to keep stakeholders informed of progress and developments.

**Crisis Management:** Develop a crisis communication plan to address potential issues or controversies related to the research project. Be prepared to respond promptly, transparently, and empathetically to mitigate negative publicity and protect the project's reputation.

**Compliance and Ethics:** Ensure compliance with ethical guidelines, data protection regulations, and intellectual property rights when sharing research findings. Respect confidentiality agreements and obtain necessary permissions for disseminating sensitive information.

**Transparency and Openness:** Be transparent about the research process, methodologies, and limitations. Provide access to data and resources whenever possible to facilitate further exploration and validation.

**Promotional items:** Choose them carefully. Promotional items that have no additional message have no purpose, therefore should not be produced unless there is strong justification.

## 12. Conclusion

Communication guidelines are designed to ensure that the funded project's objectives, progress, and results are effectively communicated to all stakeholders. By using a combination of digital and traditional channels, developing clear and compelling content, and actively engaging stakeholders, the projects will achieve its goals and make a significant impact on sustainable forest management and the bioeconomy.

**By adhering to these communication guidelines, ForestValue2 funded projects can effectively disseminate their research results, amplify their impact, and contribute to the advancement of sustainable forest management and the bioeconomy in alignment with the European Green Deal.**

## 13. Appendices

### 13.1 Appendix A: Communication Plan Template

#### Communication Plan Template

- **Project Name:** [name] under ForestValue2 Joint Call 2023
- **Objective:** [Specific communication objectives for the period]
- **Target Audience:** [Identify specific audience segments]
- **Key Messages:** [List the key messages tailored for each audience]
- **Channels:** [Detail the communication channels to be used]
- **Timeline:** [Include a timeline for each communication activity]
- **Responsibilities:** [Assign roles and responsibilities for each activity]
- **Resources:** [List any resources needed, such as budget, tools, or personnel]
- **Evaluation Metrics:** [Define KPIs for measuring the success of each activity]

### 13.2 Appendix B: Example of Stakeholder-Oriented Article

**Title:** Advancing Sustainable Forestry: Insights from the ForestValue2 funded project

**Abstract:** The ForestValue 2 funded project is a collaborative effort focused on promoting sustainable forest management across Europe. This article outlines key findings and their implications for industry stakeholders.

#### Main Content:

**Introduction:** Overview of the project and its objectives.

**Key Results:** Summary of significant research findings.

**Implications for Stakeholders:** Discussion on how these findings can be applied within the industry.

**Call to Action:** Encouragement for stakeholders to adopt new practices and collaborate further.



### 13.3 Appendix C: Social Media Engagement Guide

#### Social Media Engagement Guide

**Objective:** Maximize the reach and engagement of ForestValue2 funded project through social media platforms.

**Platforms:**

**Twitter:** Short updates, news, and event announcements using hashtags like #ForestValue2.

**LinkedIn:** Professional networking, sharing of research publications, and industry news.

**YouTube:** Hosting webinars, project videos, and interviews.

**Content Calendar:**

**Weekly Posts:** Updates on project activities.

**Monthly Highlights:** Summary of significant achievements.

**Monthly Features:** In-depth articles or interviews.

**Engagement Strategies:**

**Hashtag Usage:** #SustainableForestry #Bioeconomy #ForestValue2 #HorizonEurope #Researchandinnovation

**Interaction:** Engage with followers by replying to comments and messages.

**Visual Content:** Use infographics and short videos to enhance engagement.

### 13.4 Appendix D: Impact Assessment Questionnaire

#### Impact Assessment Questionnaire

**Purpose:** To evaluate the effectiveness of the communication activities and their impact on different stakeholder groups.

**Questions:**

1. How would you rate your awareness of the ForestValue2 funded project and its objectives?
2. Have you found the information provided through our communication channels useful?
3. What communication channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, events) do you find most effective?
4. Have the project's results influenced your work or decision-making process?
5. What suggestions do you have for improving our communication efforts?

**Response Options:** [Likert scale for quantitative analysis, open-ended for qualitative feedback]

**Distribution:** Sent via email to all stakeholders, with a follow-up reminder after two weeks.

## 14. Useful links

To help you with each step, we have found some useful resources and examples from the web search results:

- [Ten simple rules for innovative dissemination of research](#) provides some practical tips and best practices for communicating research results in an innovative and impactful way.
- [Dissemination and exploitation of research results](#) offers a comprehensive overview of the strategy, documents, tools, and opportunities related to disseminating and exploiting research project results funded by the European Union.
- [Communicating and disseminating research findings to study participants](#) reports the findings of a pilot study that explored the experiences, expectations, preferences, and capacities of researchers and past research participants in communicating and receiving research findings.
- [How to disseminate your research](#) gives some guidance on how to identify your target audiences, use the right language and channels, and maximise the impact of your research.
- [Communicating research findings](#) is a guide that helps researchers understand who their audience is, how to engage them, and how to use different methods of communication.
- [Are you communicating your Horizon Europe project?](#) is simplified publication on communication.
- [Communication, dissemination & exploitation what is the difference and why they all matter](#) simple explanatory infographic.
- [Tips for Effective EU Project Communication: Navigating the Social Media Jungle – Consulta Europa \(consulta-europa.com\)](#) the article provides tips for effectively communicating EU-funded projects on social media.