



D7.1 – DEC plan



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Work Package	WP7
Delivery Date (DoA)	M03
Actual Delivery Date	31.03.2024.
Abstract:	The Dissemination, Exploitation, and Communication (DEC) plan serves as a strategic roadmap for efficiently conveying the project's results and accomplishments to the primary target audiences. Additionally, it functions as an internal guideline for monitoring and planning. This initial iteration of the DEC plan will undergo updates to track its implementation progress.

Document Revision History			
Date	Version	Author/Contributor/ Reviewer	Summary of main changes
08/02/2024	V0.1	FSH	ToC finalized
15/02/2024	V1.0	FSH	First draft
25/02/2024	V2.0	Tatjana Knežević (FSH)	Exploitation, IPR Management Strategy & Sustainability segment reviewed
15/03/2024	V3.0	David A. Kenny (Teagasc)	Peer reviewed
22/03/2024	V4.0	FSH	Implemented suggestions

Participant Number	Participant organisation name	Short name	Country
1.	TEAGASC - AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	Teagasc	Ireland
2.	SVERIGES LANTBRUKSUNIVERSITET	SLU	Sweden
3.	INSTITUT NATIONAL DE RECHERCHE POUR L'AGRICULTURE, L'ALIMENTATION ET L'ENVIRONNEMENT	INRAE	France
4.	STICHTING WAGENINGEN RESEARCH	WR	Netherlands
5.	IFIP-INSTITUT DU PORC ASSOCIATION	IFIP	France
6.	EUROPEAN FORUM OF FARM ANIMAL BREEDERS	EFFAB	Netherlands
7.	AGENCIA ESTATAL CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTIFICAS	CSIC	Spain
8.	UDRUZENJE ZA PREDUZETNISTVO I INOVACIJE FOODSCALE HUB	FSH	Serbia
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10.	ASSOCIACAO PARA A INVESTIGACAO E INOVACAO EM NUTRICAO E ALIMENTACAO ANIMAL - FEEDINOV	FEEDINO V Colab	Portugal
11.	BUNDESANSTALT FÜR LANDWIRTSCHAFT UND ERNÄHRUNG	BLE	Germany
12.	UNIWERSYTET PRZYRODNICZY W POZNANIU	PULS	Poland
13.	JOHANN HEINRICH VON THUENEN-INSTITUT, BUNDESFORSCHUNG INSTITUT FUER LAENDLICHE RAEUME, WALD UND FISCHEREI	Thuenen	Germany
14.	IST-ID ASSOCIACAO DO INSTITUTO SUPERIOR TECNICO PARA A INVESTIGACAO E O DESENVOLVIMENTO	IST-ID	Portugal
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Title: Sustainable Livestock Systems Transition and Evidence Platform for Upgrading Policies

Type of action: HORIZON Research and Innovation Action

Topic: HORIZON-CL6-2023-FARM2FORK-01-6

Start date of project: 1 January 2024 • Duration: 48 months

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	
ELPS	European Livestock Production System
ILPS	Innovative Livestock Production System
CAP	Common Agriculture Policy
EIP-AGRI	European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
SO	Specific Objective
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
SOSTAC	Situation, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Action, Control
SCBM	Sustainable and Collaborative Business Models
DEC	Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication
TG	Target Groups
KEG	Knowledge Expert Group

Table 1 List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Executive Summary

The STEP UP Dissemination, Exploitation, and Communication Plan has been meticulously crafted to serve as a thorough roadmap for effectively carrying out tasks related to sharing, utilizing, and communicating the project's objectives and outcomes. The primary goal of this plan is to accomplish various project objectives comprehensively, including enhancing awareness about STEP UP within local, European, and global communities, engaging diverse stakeholder groups, and ensuring the practical application of the project's results.

At its core, this plan is driven by a threefold mission:

Increasing Project Awareness: A key component of the strategy is to boost awareness of the STEP UP project, not only in local areas but also on a broader European and global scale. This entails leveraging a range of communication channels, encompassing both traditional and digital media, as well as targeted marketing efforts to reach a diverse audience.

Engaging Stakeholder Groups: We acknowledge the significance of stakeholders in the success of any project. Thus, we are committed to actively involving various stakeholder groups. By fostering relationships with partners, collaborators, and beneficiaries, we aim to garner their support and leverage their knowledge and resources. The approach is tailored to meet the distinct needs and expectations of each group, ensuring that their contributions are valued.

Ensuring the Utility and Exploitation of Project Outcomes: Ultimately, the effectiveness of a project hinges on the practical utility of its outcomes. STEP UP is dedicated to translating the innovative ideas and research of the project into tangible solutions that can benefit communities and farmers. This plan delineates a pathway for effectively disseminating these solutions, ensuring they evolve into actionable tools for positive change that can benefit all actors within the agri-food supply chain in conjunction with consumers and ultimately policy makers.

This plan is devised as a comprehensive framework, offering **strategies, timelines, and resource allocations** for each component. It encompasses a variety of communication methods, ranging from traditional press releases and community engagement events to contemporary digital marketing and social media strategies. The exploitation of project results is an integral facet of the DEC plan, guaranteeing that innovative ideas are harnessed to their full potential.

With this detailed plan as a guiding document, STEP UP aims to execute these activities with diligence and excellence. This plan underscores our commitment to ensuring that the project realizes its full potential, communicates effectively, and leaves a positive and enduring impact on local, European, and global communities.

1. Introduction

1.1. Project Summary

STEP UP, a Horizon Europe project, spans from January 2024 to December 2027. Its primary objective is to bolster the development of economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable European Livestock Production Systems (ELPS). With a consortium comprising 16 partners from 10 countries, the project will actively assess and analyze Innovative Livestock Production Systems (ILPS), leveraging these findings to enhance traditional ELPS. By incorporating technology-driven approaches within ILPS, the project aims to promote more informed and sustainable practices in livestock farming. This strategic integration is expected to enhance overall efficiency, reduce environmental impact, and elevate standards of animal welfare within the European livestock sector.

1.2. Document Scope

The inaugural iteration of the STEP UP Dissemination, Exploitation, and Communication Plan has been meticulously crafted as an extensive roadmap to efficiently carry out tasks associated with disseminating, exploiting, and communicating the project's objectives. This plan is geared towards accomplishing the multifaceted goals of the project, encompassing raising awareness about the project, promoting it within local, European, and global communities, and ensuring that the outcomes of the project are accessible and beneficial to diverse stakeholder groups.

1.3. Document Structure

This document is organized into multiple sections:

Chapter 1, an overview of the project is provided, along with an outline of the document's scope and an introduction to its structure.

Chapter 2 offers insights into the project's goals and anticipated outcomes, along with details about the dissemination and communication strategy, including timelines and target audiences.

Chapter 3 delves into the specifics of dissemination and communication activities, exploring tools and channels utilized, covering elements such as visual identity, communication materials, and the array of communication channels employed.

Chapter 4 outlines the procedures and tools for reporting and monitoring, with a particular focus on key performance indicators (KPIs) and the specific activities planned for the project's initial year.

Chapter 5 presents an initial assessment of the project's assets available for leveraging, exploitation pathways, KPIs, and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) management.

Chapter 6 concludes this deliverable, summarizing key findings and insights.

2. Overview

2.1. Project aims and outcomes

STEP UP aims to collaboratively develop, validate, and showcase sustainable ELPS that foster circular and transparent livestock production within the EU, thereby enhancing the efficiency of the food system. To achieve this ambitious objective, STEP UP has identified six specific goals. These objectives collectively ensure the comprehensive evaluation of the sustainability of various present and future ELPS, addressing the fundamental challenge of the lack of a solid evidence base for developing sustainable ELPS and formulating suitable policy frameworks:

SO#1: To analyse the positive and negative impacts and externalities of European livestock production systems (ELPS) through comprehensive science-based knowledge and identify routes to overcome data gaps towards sustainability across both social and environmental contexts.

SO#2: To conduct in-depth case-studies to harmonise existing data, identify gaps and opportunities for new data collection and systems development, through invoking a multi-actor approach to ensure “real-life” contextual reference points and testbeds for new sustainability indicators, evaluation and impact methods.

SO#3: Improve existing and develop new indicators for assessing the externalities of sustainable European livestock production systems (ELPS), considering relevant value-chain factors.

SO#4: Provide a comprehensive impact assessment and cost-benefit quantification of current livestock farming systems in various socio-ecological-economic contexts through innovative measuring methods.

SO#5: To simulate transition pathways for livestock systems’ sustainability through forecast scenarios, estimating effects and monetizing impacts to capture diversity in livestock systems.

SO#6: To exchange and transfer evidence-based STEP UP knowledge of livestock farming as part of the food system and wider ecosystem to a broad range of stakeholders, supporting policy and decision makers.

2.2. Methodology

A well-structured Dissemination, Communication, and Exploitation Plan (DEC) is paramount to ensuring the efficient delivery of project activities aimed at enhancing project visibility and showcasing its outcomes. The DEC serves as a roadmap, delineating how, when, and to whom key messages will be conveyed, along with the most effective engagement strategies to increase awareness of the project's goals, results, and Open Call among key stakeholders. The STEP UP DEC plan takes inspiration from the SOSTAC marketing model and encompasses several essential elements:

Situation Analysis: This phase delves into the current status of the project, addressing questions such as “Where are we now?” It provides an overview of the project, existing challenges, consortium expertise, and the environmental, social, and economic impacts during and after project completion.

Objective Setting: The DEC plan aims to enhance productivity by establishing clear and measurable objectives. These objectives will be achieved through tailored communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities.

Stakeholders & Segmented Strategies: This step entails identifying key target stakeholders, crafting effective messages, and developing engagement strategies tailored to each stakeholder group.

Tactic Establishment & Actions: A critical aspect of the DEC plan is the amalgamation of various tools and channels outlined in the proposal. This section details the activities and involvement of all partners, addressing essential questions about the steps required to achieve objectives and delineating responsibilities for each action.

Control: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) specified in the proposal serve as a foundation for closely monitoring the DEC implementation. Various templates will be utilized for internal planning, activity implementation, monitoring, and partner reporting.

The STEP UP DEC plan, inspired by the **SOSTAC model**, is crafted to ensure effective communication, dissemination, and exploitation of project activities, with a focus on clear objectives, tailored strategies for stakeholders, and robust monitoring through KPIs.



Figure 1: Sostac model of marketing

2.2.1. Multi-actor Approach

STEP UP will adopt a multi-actor approach and develop appropriate engagement strategies by harnessing the collective experience and expertise of a diverse range of partners and stakeholders within the agri-food sector, including both pre- and post-farm gate stakeholders. This approach is pivotal to achieving the project's objectives and ensuring extensive communication right from the outset. Consequently, the multi-actor approach will encompass several vital activities:

1. Translation of project materials into the languages of our partners where applicable.
2. Provision of comprehensive and pertinent information to stakeholders and end users, encompassing both pre- and post-farm gate perspectives.
3. Utilization of language and communication channels that are most effective for each specific target group, tailored to accommodate the unique characteristics of each stakeholder group within the agri-food sector.
4. Exploration of opportunities for collaboration and synergies with other projects, initiatives, and networks within the broader agri-food community, engaging with stakeholders beyond traditional farming circles.
5. Leveraging the existing networks, communities, and event programs of our partners to our advantage, including those spanning the pre- and post-farm gate sectors.
6. Facilitation of knowledge exchange among diverse actors within the agri-food sector through participation in various activities and discussions at a range of events.

STEP UP aims to cultivate meaningful connections and generate a positive impact throughout the farming community in Europe by embracing this inclusive strategy within the broader agri-food sector.

2.3. Specific Objectives and Time Plan

The DEC objectives encompass a range of goals:

1. Facilitate the integration of essential players along the value chain and maintain continuous engagement and collaboration with stakeholders throughout the project duration.
2. Advocate for STEP UP within targeted stakeholder groups and communities by identifying critical audiences, key messages for dissemination, and engagement strategies.
3. Utilize a combination of focused and diverse content marketing and community building approaches.
4. Increase awareness of the project and its outcomes, promoting their adoption and acceptance among farmers, advisors, policymakers, and other stakeholders.
5. Strategically oversee the execution of activities related to exploitation, intellectual property management, and analysis of the competitive landscape to maximize the project's outcomes.

The DEC Plan has been crafted with a structured framework comprising four phases. This deliberate approach ensures perfect alignment between the project's advancement and its dissemination, communication, and exploitation endeavors. Such synchronization serves as the bedrock for fostering not only a seamless and strategically sound implementation of the project but also for maximizing the overall efficiency and effectiveness throughout its lifecycle.

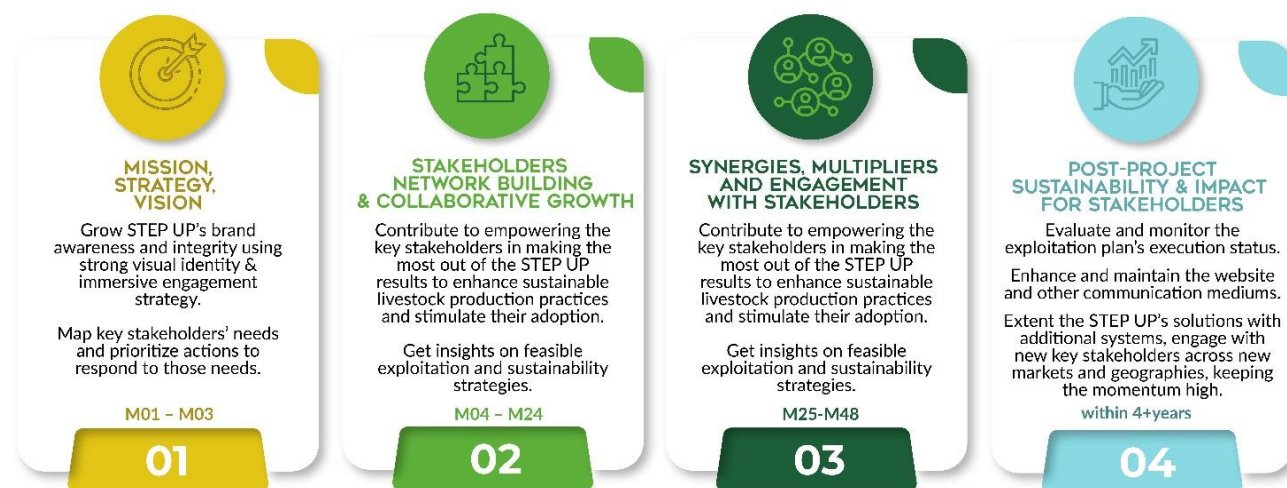


Figure 2: STEP UP Phases of DEC Strategy Implementation

2.4. Target Groups

Target Groups (TG)	TGs KEY MESSAGES
TG1 - Farmers, processors, and on-field livestock practitioners (livestock and feed crop producers, hatcheries, slaughterhouses, animal health experts, food chain organisations, agricultural advisors)	Promote efficient eco-friendly alternatives to traditional livestock practices. Through evidence-based case - study activities, farmers will gain direct insight into relevant solutions and novel strategies that can enhance the European livestock landscape. This target group will be included in the collection of a range of sustainability related metrics on farms including economic, soil carbon, GHG, biodiversity, water quality and animal welfare.
TG2 - Data providers (i.e., FADN and Eurostat at NUTS 2 level)	Support the generation of livestock sector datasets and their exploitation in tracking and beyond, by (1) improving existing and developing new indicators to enable the measurement of negative, positive impacts and externalities of different types of ELPS, and (2) developing methods for true cost accounting of livestock systems.
TG3 - Scientific community; Research institutions and industry experts	Deliver elaborated concepts and research results that the livestock sector can benefit from, ensuring its sustainability, the upscaling of concepts and enabling the uptake of the industry.
TG4 - Policy makers at different levels (national, regional and EU authorities, the Bureaus of Statistics)	Communicate livestock data and indicators for development of adequate policy and future planning.
TG5 - European Commission and EC projects and STEP UP-related initiatives	Advocate Project in Europe and beyond EC projects; Collaborative activities with EC funded projects and initiatives.
TG6 - General public (among others: wholesalers and retailers, packaging developers, consumers, NGOs, environmental organisations - e.g. FEFAC, Animal Health Europe, EFFAB, Copa Cogeca, Greenpeace, EEB)	Involve civil society in the project's activities to ensure STEP UP knowledge and innovative solutions are spread widely. Promote the benefits of sustainable livestock production and create a supportive climate of opinion (market pull strategies to be implemented). Raise awareness of the benefits of selected sustainable practices.

Table 2 STEP UP Target Groups

3. Dissemination and Communication channels, tools and activities

3.1. Visual Identity

The initial phase of the dissemination and communication efforts involves crafting a distinctive and impactful visual identity that can establish the project's recognition within local, European, and global communities. This enduring visual identity should be rooted in a central concept, enabling it to promptly convey a consistent and transparent message about STEP UP's objectives and embody its fundamental principles. It serves as the project's emblem, whether in the physical or digital realm. Consequently, the STEP UP team has meticulously designed an accessible visual identity comprising the following elements: a cutting-edge aesthetic that seamlessly blends classic and contemporary elements. This visual identity includes a logo, a branding guide, templates, and guidelines for partners to ensure the proper utilization of communication components to promote the STEP UP initiative and acknowledge EU funding. Furthermore, the project has developed and produced a Visual Identity Book, a dedicated website, and an Offline Identity Material Package.

3.1.1. Logo and Branding Book

The foundational components of STEP UP's visual identity comprise its logo and branding guidelines. These elements are meticulously crafted to serve multiple purposes: to capture attention, create a strong initial impact, and, most importantly, convey a multi-faceted message that offers insight into STEP UP's mission of "Stepping Up for Europe's Sustainable Livestock Systems - Scientific Solutions Shaping Resilient European Policies". Moreover, the logo symbolizes sustainability and ascent, while retaining a sense of simplicity, boldness, and freshness.

The selection of a contemporary font and the colors green, blue, and yellow is informed by several factors. Green embodies qualities of openness, nature, agriculture, health, growth, and harmony. Blue signifies security, loyalty, and responsibility, further reinforcing the brand's dedication to its mission. Yellow represents optimism, innovation, and energy, aligning with STEP UP's forward-thinking approach to sustainable livestock production.

The logo will be utilized across various internal and external communication channels, including the project website, presentations, flyers, press releases, and more. This consistent application aims to establish a compelling brand identity and enhance project visibility. Additionally, a comprehensive branding guide and color palette have been thoughtfully curated to effectively communicate the project's core values and principles.



Figure 3: STEP UP color palette

3.1.2. European Flag and Funding Statement

All STEP UP communication activities of the beneficiaries related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities or major result funded by the grant must acknowledge EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate).



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Figure 4: EU emblem used for STEP UP

This project has received funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee grant numbers 10103702. Where appropriate, the UKRI emblem can be included.



Figure 5 UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) emblem

3.1.3. Disclaimer for Publications

In addition to the EU Emblem, all dissemination and communication material will include the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):

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3.1.4. Templates

Given that events, conferences, webinars, fairs, exhibitions, and similar platforms serve as the primary channels for communication and dissemination, a **presentation template** (in PowerPoint format) has been carefully crafted to align with the visual identity of STEP UP. The primary objectives behind this design were to maintain consistency and enhance project recognition, as the goal is to effectively showcase the project's outcomes.

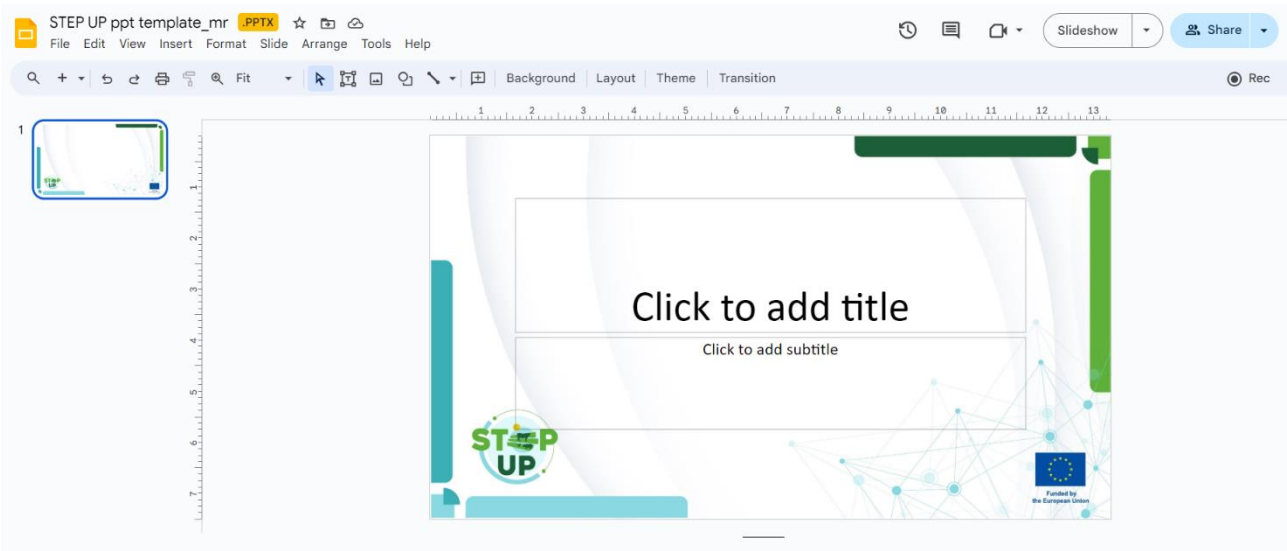


Figure 6: Presentation template for Powerpoint

The STEP UP deliverable template has been meticulously designed to conform to the guidelines outlined in the visual identity book. It will serve as the standardized format utilized by all project partners for generating project deliverables. This template comprises a cover page prominently showcasing the project's logo, acronym, deliverable details (including number, full title, and work package number, etc.), and complementary letterhead and social media templates have also been developed to complement it.



[Enter deliverable title here]

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This project has received funding from the European Union Horizon research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101019785.

Author(s)/Organisation(s)	
Contributor(s)	
Work Package	
Delivery Date (DoA)	
Actual Delivery Date	

Abstract:

Document Revision History			
Date	Version	Author/Contributor/ Reviewer	Summary of main changes

Participant Number	Participant organisation name	Short name	Country
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12.	UNIWEISYET PRZYRODNICZY W POZNANIU	PULS	Poland
13.	JOHANN HEINRICH VON THUENEN-INSTITUT, BUNDESFORSCHUNG INSTITUT FUER LAENDLICHE RAUML, WALD UND FISCHEREI	Thuenen	Germany
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Figure 7: Deliverable template

3.2. Communication Materials



Figure 8: Promotional material

The communication materials of STEP UP have been meticulously crafted with the aim of sparking interest and fostering engagement within local, European, and global communities, as well as among various public and stakeholder groups. These materials are tailored for both online and offline utilization, facilitating a broader reach and efficient dissemination of the project's message. To amplify visibility, a project-specific roll-up banner will be utilized at events and television appearances, and a promotional kit has been curated, consisting of notebooks, folders, roll-ups, banners, stickers, and badges.

3.3. STEP UP Channel Mix

3.3.1. Website

The STEP UP website (<https://horizon-stepup.eu/>) has been developed, with the landing page unveiled in the first month (M1). This website is poised to become a primary communication and dissemination tool for the project. It will revolve around the concept of inspiring storytelling, adhering to a "Demonstrate and Explain" principle, and showcasing captivating visuals aligned with the project's objectives, results, news, and impact. The website will prioritize ease of navigation and receive regular updates contributed by all partners. Serving as a comprehensive resource center for various research topics, the website will provide crucial updates to drive impact. Notably, it will be optimized for mobile devices to enhance accessibility and amplify the project's influence.

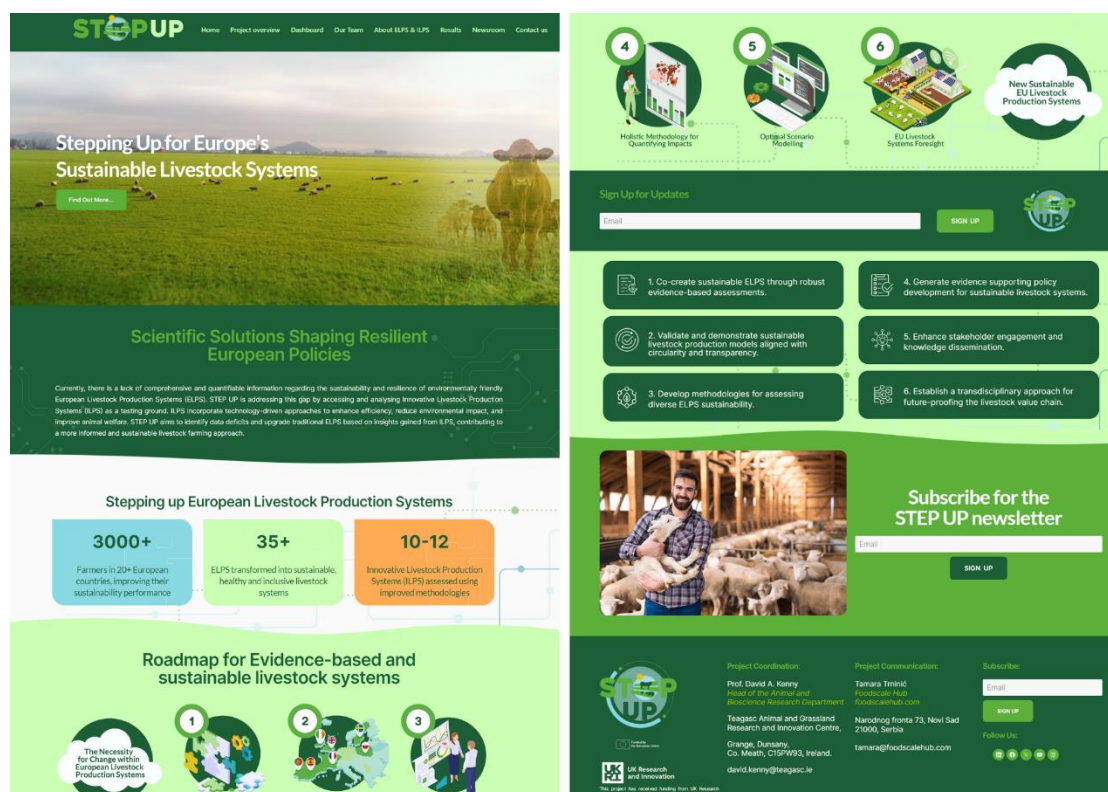


Figure 9 STEP UP website homepage

The website is organized with the following sections/tabs:

1. **Home/Landing page:** This section prominently displays the project logo, graphics, project motto, goals, crops in focus, a set of values, a newsletter subscription pop-up, along with social media icons (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram), and contact information.
2. **Project overview:** Provides a more detailed project description and outlines the project's goals.
3. **Our team:** Features the consortium partners and provides brief descriptions of each. Users can click on each partner's logo, leading to a new page with a short description of their institution/organization and their role in the project, along with a link to their website.
4. **Dashboard:** A secondary project domain, knowledge sharing and networking online space.
5. **About ELPS & ILPS:** An overview of selected ELPS/ILPS and explained principles.
6. **Results:** Features information and links to public project deliverables and results. This section ensures open access to publications generated during the project's duration, enhancing citation counts for academic publications and reports, increasing visibility among practitioners and stakeholders, and facilitating future research building upon project results.
7. **Newsroom:** Contains press releases, news posts, and articles to inform stakeholders about project activities, upcoming events, results, and SIP progress. Includes a Media Kit in the drop-down menu, offering materials such as logos, posters, brochures, flyers, and other communication resources of interest to media outlets.
8. **Contact us:** Includes all contact information for the project, enabling easy communication with stakeholders.

Additionally, the website incorporates a Privacy Policy and Terms and Conditions, establishing general rules and policies governing visitors' use of the STEP UP website.

3.3.1.1. Dashboard

FSH will establish an extra virtual platform exclusively dedicated to the STEP UP Dashboard, a secondary project domain. This virtual space will be seamlessly integrated with the official STEP UP website, enhancing

accessibility and user engagement. Oversight of content creation and ongoing management of the Dashboard throughout the project's duration will be undertaken by EFFAB. Leveraging the technological and IT proficiency within the FSH ecosystem ensures that the development and maintenance of the STEP UP Dashboard will be executed with precision and efficiency, guaranteeing seamless functionality and timely delivery.

Special emphasis will be placed on involving a dedicated Knowledge Expert Group (KEG) in the collaborative development of a user-friendly concept for the STEP UP Dashboard. This KEG will play a vital role in shaping the framework and foundational elements of the Dashboard, ensuring its accessibility and ease of use for all users.

3.3.2. Social Media

The primary objective of the project is to establish a strong presence on social media platforms and foster interactive online communication with both key target groups and the general public.



Figure 10: Icons presenting STEP UP's social media presence

To enhance this interaction, six media platforms were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Consideration of the target audience.
2. Identifying the most cost-effective channels for promptly sharing project updates with all stakeholder groups.
3. Determining the most suitable and influential media channels for disseminating information about ILPS models and more, showcasing STEP UP's legacy to impact a wide range of key stakeholders and upgrade European Livestock Production Systems.
4. Leveraging the most popular social media platforms used by STEP UP partners for effective communication and engagement with stakeholders.

STEP UP will actively maintain a presence on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram where specific metrics have been established for each platform to assess their effectiveness. To enhance project visibility and amplify its impact, STEP UP will leverage the social media networks of the consortium. This entails partners actively sharing, publishing, and retweeting content from STEP UP's social media accounts and website, thereby boosting interest in project-related activities and driving more traffic to partners' websites and social media platforms. Furthermore, partners are encouraged to create relevant content aligned with the project's initiatives and disseminate it through their own channels.

Once the most suitable channels have been selected, there are several key considerations for posts:

Interactivity: The primary focus is on creating content that encourages audience engagement. Posts should be easily comprehensible to a non-specialist audience to facilitate interaction.

Relevance and Clarity: All posts should effectively convey the main message, doing so clearly and concisely. This ensures that the content aligns with the interests, needs, and preferences of each target group.

Eye-catching Visuals: Engaging visuals and catchy headlines are essential for increasing post conversions.



Figure 11: Diagram presenting method for crafting enticing social media content

In addition to these considerations, relevant and memorable hashtags have been crafted that will be vital for establishing a strong social media presence. The hashtag STEP UP will always be included in any project-related post made by partners.

#StepUpEU 🐮 **#SustainableLivestockSystems**
 🔍 **#ResearchAndInnovation** **#PolicyTransition** 📄
#Sustainability **#FoodSystems** **#Biodiversity**
#EcosystemServices **#GHGemissions** 🏭
#ScienceBasedEvidence **#RegenerativeAgriculture**
 ⚙️ **#Circularity** **#ClimateFriendly**
#SustainableFood 🖥️ **#HorizonEurope**

Figure 12: Hashtags selected for more effective project promotion

The hashtags might be adjusted based on their performance, insights gained, and suggestions from the entire consortium. The diagram below illustrates the components of an eye-catching social media post, which will form the basis for creating effective posts throughout the duration of STEP UP.

3.3.2.1. LinkedIn

A LinkedIn page (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/step-up-eu/>) has been established to engage with the STEP UP target audiences and showcase the project's activities. The LinkedIn profile will serve as a hub for connecting with the research community, agricultural sectors, industry and institutional stakeholders, environmental organizations, and other relevant target audiences. Regular updates and announcements regarding the project will be shared on the LinkedIn page, and partners will be urged to initiate discussions on various topics to foster engagement with a wider audience.

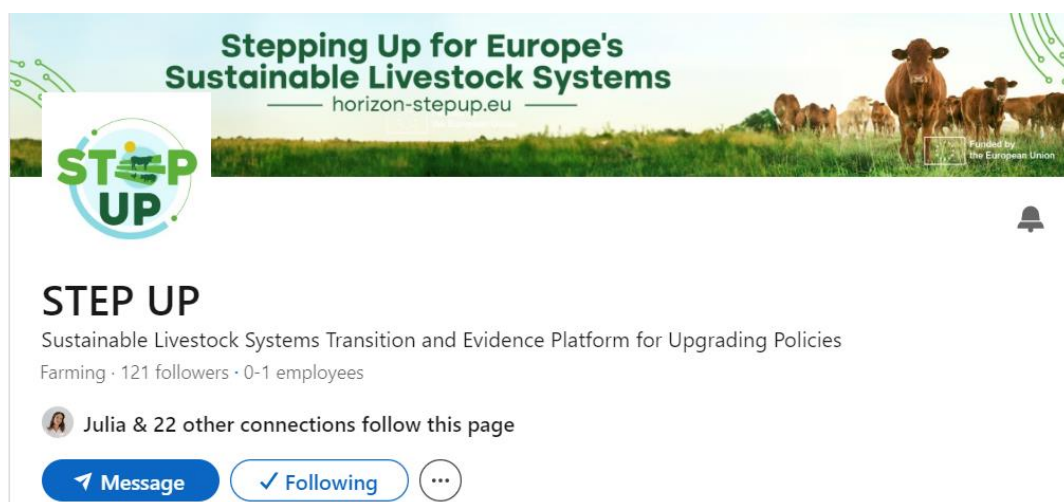


Figure 13 STEP UP's LinkedIn Page

3.3.2.2. Facebook

STEP UP has launched a [Facebook page](#) with the primary objective of raising awareness about the project, especially among the farmers, processors and on-field livestock practitioners.

Foodscale Hub, the leader of WP7-9, will be responsible for administering the page, including managing other social media platforms. The page features a brief project overview and offers important public information, as well as sharing relevant links of interest.



Figure 14 STEP UP's Facebook Page

3.3.2.3. Youtube

A YouTube channel ([STEP UP - YouTube](#)) will be utilized to host and promote videos, encompassing a wide variety of content such as interviews, insights from sustainable innovation pilots, and more.

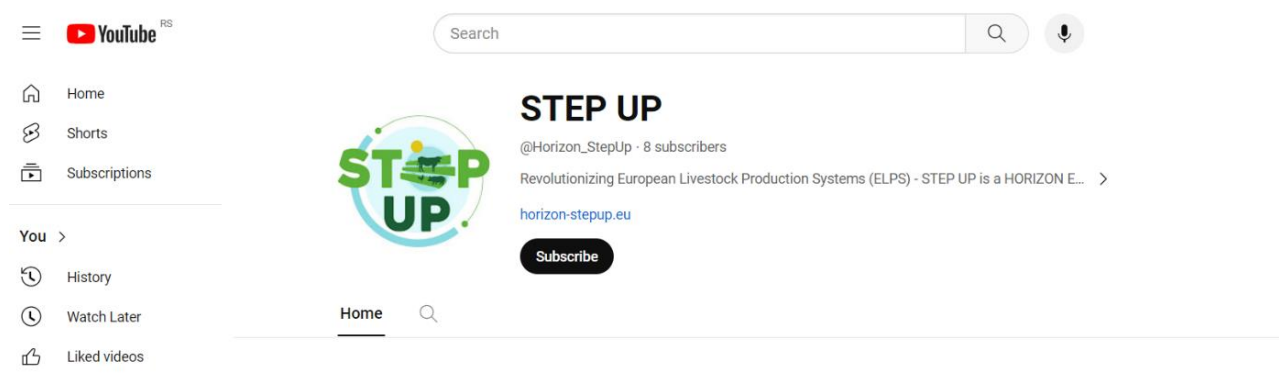


Figure 15: Snippet of STEP UP's YouTube channel

3.3.2.4. X (Twitter)

A Twitter account, accessible at https://twitter.com/Horizon_StepUp, has been created with the goal of increasing the project's visibility and engaging specific audience segments, especially policymakers and advisors. STEP UP will follow the principle of "less is more," utilizing concise and succinct messages (under 280 characters) to interact with the audience, share project updates, news about events, articles, blogs, and more. Twitter's wide popularity and its simple, condensed format make it an invaluable tool for building an active community.



Figure 16STEP UP's X Page

3.3.2.5. Instagram

An Instagram profile has been created and will be used (https://www.instagram.com/horizon_stepup_eu/) in order to attract diverse range of audience and expanding its reach to a wider audience.

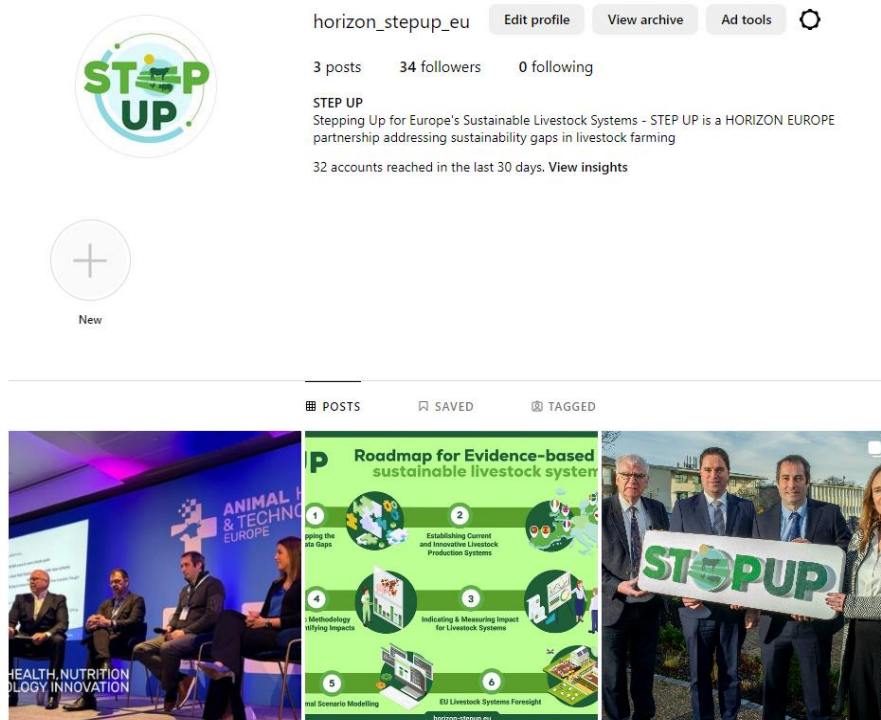


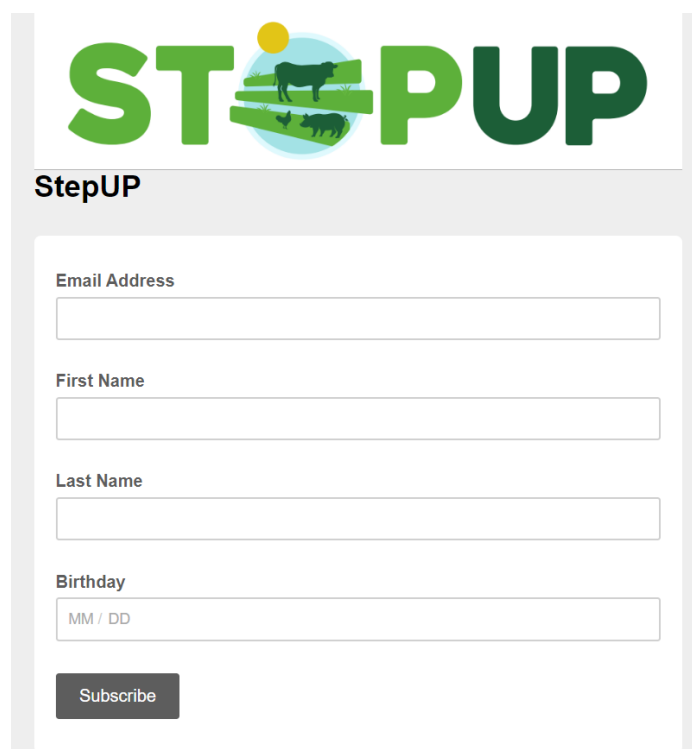
Figure 17: Snippet of STEP UP's Instagram page

3.3.3. Newsletter

An electronic newsletter will be distributed semi-annually via Mailchimp, a marketing automation and email marketing platform. This communication channel will deliver emails to subscribers, offering pertinent information about the project, including latest developments, pilot results, activities, workshops, demonstrations, events, new publications, and recent reports.

The distribution of the newsletter and management of the subscription base will prioritize security and respect for the privacy and confidentiality of users' personal data. All activities related to personal data will adhere to applicable national, European, and international legal regulations, including the EU's General Data Protection Regulation 2016/6798. Interested parties will have the option to subscribe or unsubscribe from the STEP UP newsletters at any time, with all collected data securely stored on the responsible partner's servers and inaccessible to third parties. Partners are encouraged to promote the newsletter within their networks to expand distribution and engage more subscribers.

A Mailchimp account for STEP UP has already been established for distributing newsletters. Subscribers will be collected through various methods, including subscription fields on the project website and a dedicated URL generated through Mailchimp, which is promoted through STEP UP's social media pages and leads to the subscription form.



The image shows a Mailchimp subscription form for STEP UP. At the top is the STEP UP logo, which features the word 'STEP' in green, a stylized graphic of a sun, a cow, and a sheep, and the word 'UP' in green. Below the logo is the text 'StepUP' in a bold, sans-serif font. The form itself is a light gray box containing four input fields: 'Email Address', 'First Name', 'Last Name', and 'Birthday'. The 'Birthday' field is a date picker with 'MM / DD' as a placeholder. At the bottom of the form is a dark gray 'Subscribe' button.

Figure 18: Mailchimp subscription form for STEP UP

Finally, subscribers will also be gathered during live and web events. It's worth noting that, to broaden distribution and attract subscribers, STEP UP partners are encouraged to inform their contacts, who may have an interest in the project, about the newsletter's availability.

The typical structure of newsletters that will be predominantly followed in the project is as follows:

- Introduction
- Project Update/Key news, deliverables, and project events
- Other news
- Resources for further reading (suggested by all partners)

3.3.4. Press Outreach

Press outreach in STEP UP encompasses multiple Communication Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- **Press releases**
- **Speeches/interviews, participation in media (TV, radio)**
- **Featured articles in industry magazines**

Press outreach can also partially overlap with the STEP UP Communication KPI found in the "Digital & Social Media" section of Communication KPIs, named "Editorial backlinks in top-tier online magazine outlets."

Press releases will be crafted and distributed for publication among national/EU/regional/local press to promote the project's latest activities and developments to a broader audience, as well as address more specific stakeholders.

To maximize the dissemination of information to local stakeholders, the consortium will translate the press releases into all of the consortium partners' languages. Specifically:

- English
- Swedish
- French

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- Dutch
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- German
- Polish
- Serbian

Partners are strongly encouraged and expected to participate in press release campaigns by:

- Distributing the press releases through media outlets their organization (or specifically, their marketing department) has established relationships with. Preliminary media outlets overview is available through Annex 3.
- Additionally, partners will be encouraged to publish the press release on their organization's website.
- Partners will have the freedom to tailor the press releases to better suit the needs of their targeted audience. For instance, they may modify the headline or the content of the press release to emphasize their role in the project. They will also be urged to include images that accurately depict their involvement in STEP UP. These adjustments are encouraged as they may increase the likelihood of local media outlets publishing the press release, given the involvement of an organization from their country.

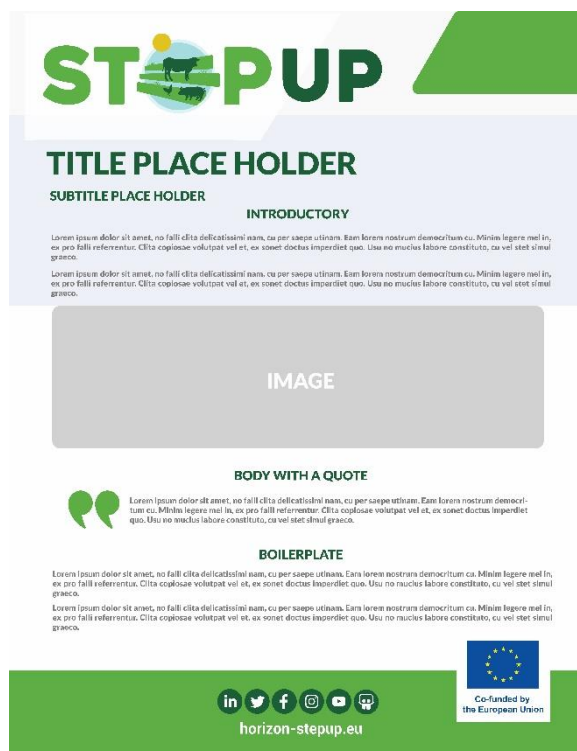


Figure 19: Press release template intended for distribution

The press release will also be prominently featured on the project website.

One press release has been issued in M2. It was uploaded to the project website and shared with partners for inclusion on their organizations' websites and dissemination to local media.

The KPI **“Speeches/interviews, participation in media (TV, radio)”** refers to delivering short statements and conducting short/long interviews for television and radio broadcasts, as well as podcasts.

To effectively meet this KPI, partners can:

- Extend invitations to media representatives and journalists during Open Day events.

- Cultivate relationships with media outlets and programs that specialize in livestock, food production, and sustainability.

“Featured articles in industry magazines” is a KPI that can be fulfilled by:

- Distributing press releases to both online and print media outlets.
- Incorporating mentions of STEP UP when partners participate in interviews with online and print media outlets.
- Organizing news pieces focused on the project or individual focuses with specific media outlets.

3.3.5. Publications

STEP UP will be highly dedicated to producing a) scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals and b) practice abstracts aimed at significantly impacting all stakeholders across the diverse spectrum of STEP UP. This endeavor will contribute to advancing the project and showcasing its groundbreaking achievements.

To adhere to the prevailing European Union regulations concerning Open Access and Open Science, all publications generated will adhere to the principles of Open Access and open peer-review. Consequently, these publications will be hosted on platforms like Open Research Europe and/or open-access journals (both green and gold).

The accessibility of project outputs through Open Access will offer several significant advantages:

- a. Increased citation counts for academic publications and reports;
- b. Enhanced impact due to heightened visibility among practitioners and the broader stakeholder community, with a particular focus on farmers in this project;
- c. Greater likelihood that future research and analysis can build upon and reuse project findings rather than starting from scratch. This, in turn, contributes to the reproducibility and sustained continuity of research results.

3.3.5.1. Policy Recommendations

Within the scope of the STEP UP project, Policy Recommendations are included and more specifically listed under the Exploitation KPIs.

The core aim behind crafting policy recommendations lies in STEP UP's alignment with the Farm to Fork (F2F) strategy, essential for fostering sustainable food systems as outlined in the European Green Deal. STEP UP integrates CAP objectives and targets within its framework, ensuring synergy with EU priorities such as biodiversity, pollution reduction, and climate action. It actively engages with key stakeholders and international organizations, offering concrete recommendations for sustainability. Insights from STEP UP contribute to global initiatives and inform the development of environmental footprint rules and livestock sustainability frameworks within and outside the CAP. Through Sustainable Justice and Operational Space (SJOS), STEP UP provides guidance for efficient livestock systems within defined boundaries.

3.3.5.2. Peer-reviewed Papers and Conference Contributions

STEP UP will strive to publish 8 or more peer-reviewed papers and conference contributions. The consortium will aim to publish them in highly-rated journals and respected conferences.

Peer-reviewed papers and conference contributions are crucial scientific publications that serve as a primary means of disseminating a project's outputs and results to the scientific community. Importantly, they lend scientific credibility to a project.

Within STEP UP, scientific publications will primarily be undertaken by partners from the field of research and universities. The publications will address or directly relate to several topics closely associated with STEP UP's goals.

A tentative template for dissemination and communication planning is included in Chapter 4.2.

3.3.6. Event Planning

Event planning will be organized into three distinct phases, each with its own tentative schedule.

The first phase involves partners informing the Project Coordinator and WP7-9 leaders about their desire to present STEP UP in some capacity. To facilitate this process, a dedicated sheet for planning dissemination activities has been created and shared on the project's repository (further details provided in section 4.2, Reporting Templates). Partners can use this sheet to outline their planned event activities, including the event name, website, date and location, target group, STEP UP's role, and details of potential joint activities with other projects. Partners are encouraged to submit their event suggestions at least 4 months prior to the event to ensure that planning and execution remain aligned with the guidelines outlined in Figure 13.

In addition to documenting the event in the planning sheet, partners are advised to email WP4 leaders to inform them of the upcoming activity if they require support or promotion.

The second phase centers on the selection and execution of event participation. Figure 23 outlines the tentative guidelines and timeline for event selection within the EU. These guidelines and timelines have been established to ensure that event participation remains consistent with the project's objectives and budgetary constraints.

STEP UP representatives will feature in relevant events, such as the Animal Health, Nutrition Technology, the Innovation Conference or the European Federation of Animal Science (EAAP) Annual Meeting, or the British Society of Animal Science (BSAS) Annual Conference.

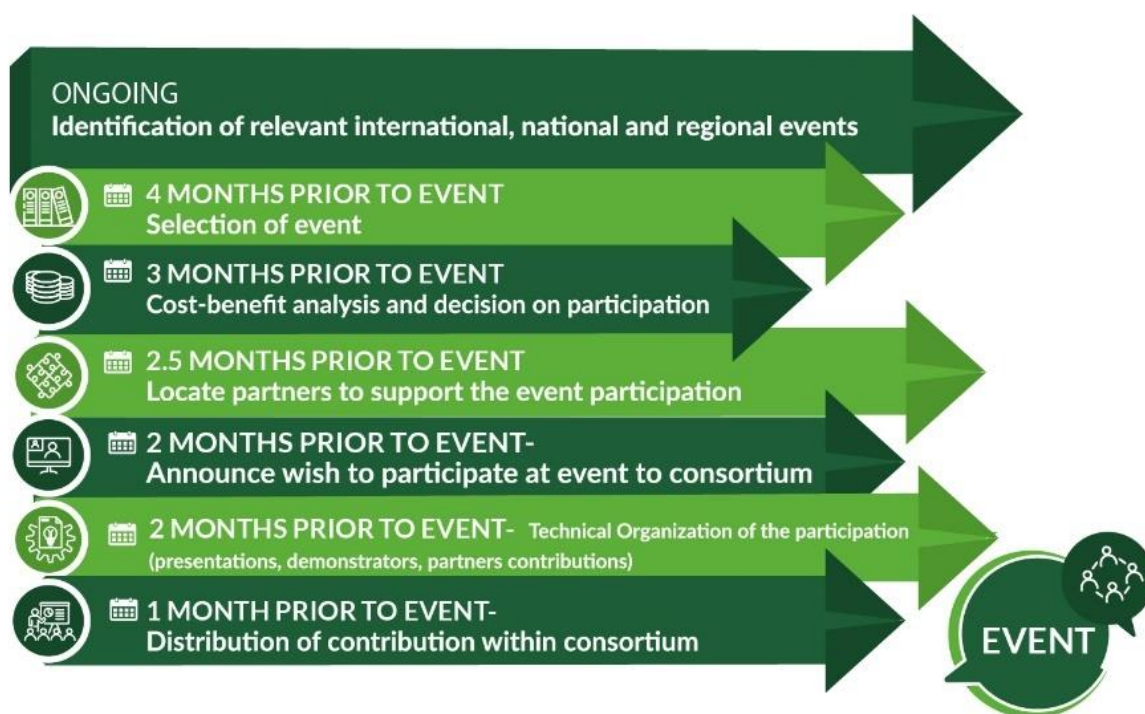


Figure 20: STEP UP guidelines and timeline for event selection

3.3.7. Networking and Synergies

Fostering synergies and broadening the STEP UP ecosystem stands as the foremost objective of the DEC plan. Much of the project's endeavors will be grounded in empirical evidence, focusing on knowledge, insights, and data accumulated by partners in other projects. This collaborative approach will also be applied to the DEC, following a strategic three-step method.

Phase 1: Identification

Initially, we will pinpoint areas of shared interest and potential collaborations and synergies. WP7-9 leaders will request partners to provide details of any other projects, networks, or initiatives they are currently involved in that could be relevant to STEP UP, beyond those outlined in the STEP UP proposal and others identified by initial scanning (Annex 1, Annex 2). Partners will be prompted to provide this information periodically through the dedicated Google Form for reporting on dissemination and communication KPIs (further details on activity reporting can be found in section 4.2 – Reporting templates). This approach ensures ongoing updates to the list, incorporating any new projects that may arise.

STEP UP will consider both projects nearing completion and those operating concurrently. Engaging with projects nearing completion will facilitate network expansion for STEP UP while assisting the other project in achieving sustainability and maintaining its momentum. Projects, networks, and initiatives running concurrently will offer numerous opportunities to strengthen communication pathways and participate in collaborative endeavors.

Phase 2: Evaluation

To ensure that networks, synergies, and partnerships contribute effectively to the success of STEP UP and align with its goals, each potential project, initiative, or network will undergo a comprehensive evaluation. This assessment will consider key qualitative and quantitative indicators, including but not limited to:

- Relevance
- Added value and impact (such as increased visibility)
- Feasibility (taking into account factors like timeline and resource availability)
- Terms of collaboration

The evaluation findings, combined with input from consortium partners, will inform the consortium's collective decision-making process regarding these potential collaborations.

Phase 3: Contact

Once projects and initiatives have been selected, the approach for engagement will be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the unique characteristics of each one.

Phase 4: Action

The communication strategy and collaborative activities will be developed through consultations involving representatives from the selected projects and initiatives, as well as the STEP UP consortium. These activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Collaborative communication, dissemination, and exploitation initiatives
- Joint policy events
- Coordination of research efforts and potential joint publications
- Sharing of data, inputs, and outputs
- Participation in each other's events
- Establishing cross-links to projects and their events on websites and social media platforms.

3.3.8. Videos

The consortium members will engage proactively in creating video blogs (vlogs). These vlogs will feature project background details, updates on research and implementation progress, and the evolution of ELPS into ILPS. They will also encompass image galleries and video content shared on online platforms such as Vimeo or YouTube, showcasing the “before and after” effects of designated Livestock Production Systems. One vlog/blog would be created per selected ILPS.

Also, short, and catchy educational videos will be created in collaboration with the whole consortium and outside experts and will be used to inform young people about agriculture and livestock.

3.3.9. EC Tools

STEP UP will seek to utilize various tools provided by the European Commission to facilitate the dissemination, exploitation, and communication of the project’s outcomes.

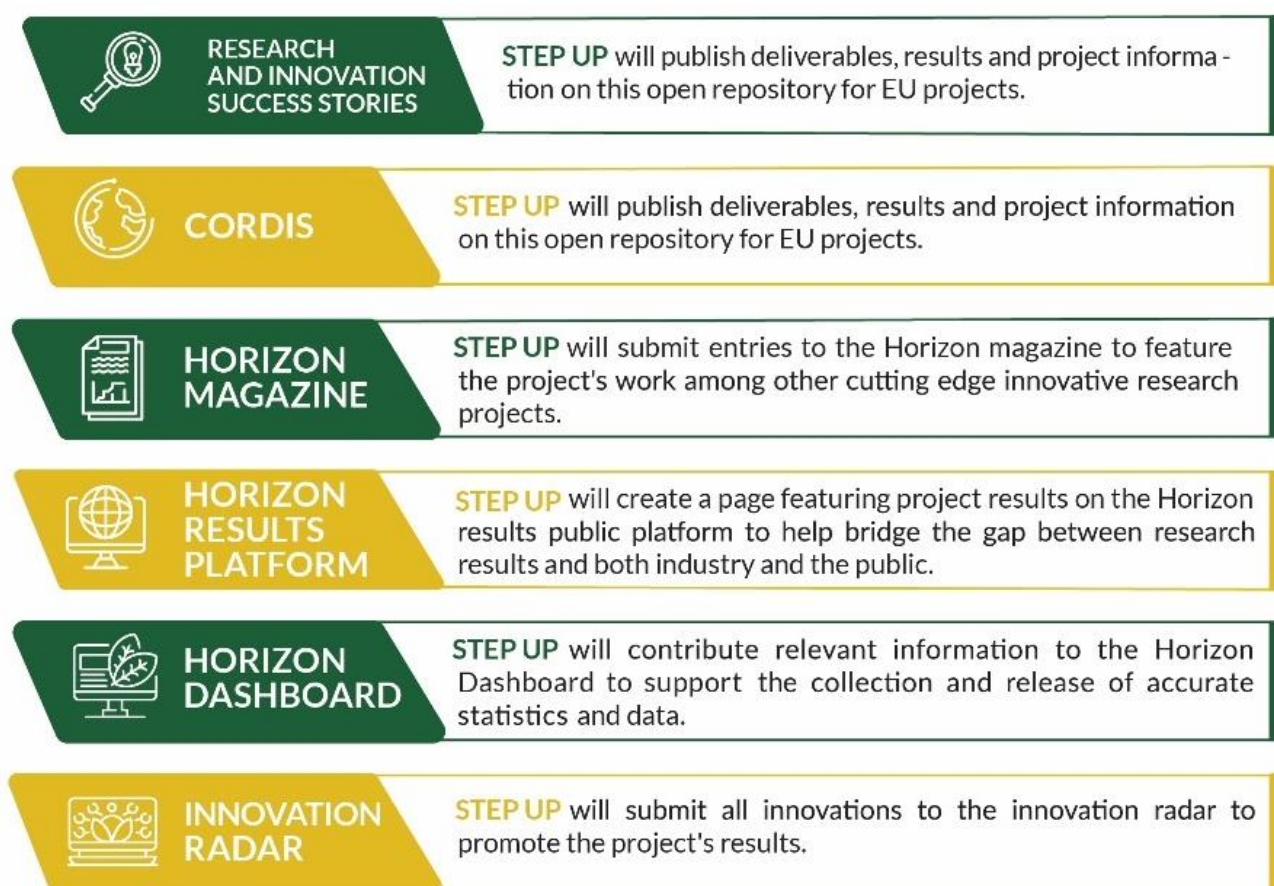


Figure 21: EC Tools

4. Monitoring and evaluation

4.1. KPIs

Dissemination (D), Communication (C) and Exploitation (E) KPIs		TARGET	The periods below are semi-annual.					
1. Dissemination activities			M1-M9	M9- M18	M19- M27	M28- M36	M37- M42	M43- M48
Co-organization of one-off conferences, cross visits, data webinars and on-demand presentations (disKPIs 1)	Organising cross visits (once per year)	4		1	1	1	1	
	Organising high-level events	25	1	4	5	6	6	3
	Organising Open Days	8			2	2	2	2
	Organising live & on-demand webinars	6		1	1	2	1	1
	Organising conferences/workshops for presenting STEP UP innovative methods	3			1	1	1	
	Organising Project Solution Showcase and final event	1						1
	Focus groups of selected ELPS and ILPS case-study actors to assess the capacity of conditions within the case-study ELPS and ILPS to adapt in different scenarios	10		3	3	3	1	
Networking, synergies & liaison activities (disKPIs 2)	Joint press releases & statements	5		1	1	1	1	1
	Joint activities with > 6 EU initiatives/projects	6+		1	1	2	1	1
Community & ecosystem building (disKPIs 3)	Policy recommendations enabling positive externalities to dominate over negative externalities for keeping EU livestock systems within SIOS	4+		1	1	1	1	
	Peer-reviewed papers & conferences contributions	15		1	4	4	4	2
	EIP-AGRI Practice abstracts	13		3	3	4	2	1
2. Communication activities								
Full Branding & Web Design	Printable brand book and guideline	1	1					
	Website	1	1					
	Social media accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)	5	5					
	Coordinated materials (poster, brochures, fact sheet)	1	1					
	Notebook, folder, roll-ups, banners and stickers	1	1					
Digital & Social Media	Social media kit (feed and story templates, video covers)	1	1					
	Unique website pageviews	25000	4000	4000	5000	5000	4000	3000
	No. of views/downloads (audio-visual material, brochures, etc.)	2500	400	400	500	500	400	300
	Bounce rate (%)	<40%						
	Blog posts (incl. editorial infographics and insights from market)	70+	11	13	13	13	10	10
	Social media followers	2000	300	400	400	300	300	300
	Newsletter subscribers	500+	90	85	85	85	85	70
Press Outreach & Event Planning	Avg. click-to-open rate	20-30%						
	Editorial backlinks in top-tier online magazine outlets	20		3	5	5	3	4
	Press releases	10+	1	2	2	2	1	2
	Speeches/Interviews (TV, radio)	5+	2	2	1	1	1	
3. Exploitation activities								
Ecosystem building with consumers, retailers, and other industry partners for sustained uptake of the STEP UP solutions	STEP UP Sustainability catalogue	1	ALL PARTNERS					
	IP Workshops	2						
	Policy Recommendations	4+						
	MoUs/ LoIs signed with investors and other potential partners	6						

Figure 22: Sheet for KPI distribution per period in STEP UP

Measurable and specific targets, known as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), play a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of the project. While earlier sections have already addressed some dissemination and communication KPIs, a comprehensive set has been identified during the proposal stage and categorized into Dissemination and Communication KPIs, outlined in tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3: STEP UP Dissemination KPIs

Co-organization of one-off conferences, cross visits, data webinars and on-demand presentations	4 Organising cross visits (once per year); 25 Organising high-level events; 8 Organising Open Days; 6 Organising live & on-demand webinars; 3 Organising conferences/workshops for presenting STEP UP innovative methods; 1 Organising Project Solution Showcase and final event; 10 Focus groups of selected ELPS and ILPS case-study actors to assess the capacity of conditions within the case-study ELPS and ILPS to adapt in different scenarios
Networking, synergies & liaison activities	5 Joint press releases & statements; 6+ Joint activities with > 6 EU initiatives/projects
Community & ecosystem building	4+ Policy recommendations enabling positive externalities to dominate over negative externalities for keeping EU livestock systems within SIOS; 15 Peer-reviewed papers & conferences contributions; 13 EIP-AGRI Practice abstracts

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Table 4: STEP UP Communication KPIs

Full Branding & Web Design	1 (Printable) brand book and guideline. 1 website (incl. a link to an online exchange platform developed); 5 social media accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram); Coordinated dissemination & communication materials: 1 (posters, brochures, project factsheet), 1 (notebook, folder, roll-ups, banners, stickers), 1 social media kit (feed & story templates, video covers)
Digital & Social Media	25,000 unique website pageviews, 1500 no. of views/downloads (audio-visual material, brochures, etc.); < 40% bounce rate; 70+ blog posts (incl. infographics and insights from end users, market and policy experts); 2000 social media followers; 500+ newsletter subscribers, 20-30% avg. click-to-open rate; 20 editorial backlinks in top-tier online magazine outlets
Community & ecosystem building	10+ press releases; 5+ speeches/interviews (TV, radio); 20 featured articles in magazines

Additionally, a provisional KPI distribution plan has been formulated and shared with the partners. This plan is divided into two sections:

- One section outlines the distribution of KPIs per partner, as each partner is responsible for fulfilling specific KPI obligations. The allocation of KPIs to each partner takes into consideration their contributions to WP7-9, as outlined in the Grant Agreement.
- Another section details the distribution of KPIs per reporting period: STEP UP has set certain milestones to ensure the smooth progression of the project. The KPIs have been allocated across the reporting periods: M1-M9, M10-M18, M19-M27, M28-M36, M37-41, M42-M48. These periods are a combination of internal reporting periods specified in the consortium agreement and official reporting periods.

The KPI distribution sheet is accessible in the shared STEP UP folder, accessible to all consortium members. Additionally, screenshots of this sheet are provided in the following two figures. The KPI distribution plan can be modified based on the learning takeaways.

EFFORT		TARGET	TEAGASC	SLU	INRAE	WR	IFIP	EFFAB	CSIC	FSH	IDELE	FEEDINOV COLLAB	BLE	PULS	Thuenen	IST-IO	ITAVI	QUB
Dissemination (D), Communication (C) and Exploitation (E) KPIs																		
1. Dissemination activities																		
Co-organization of one-off conferences, cross visits, data webinars and on-demand presentations (disKPIs 1)	Organising cross visits (once per year)	4	2									1	1					
	Organising high-level events	25																
	Organising Open Days	8	2	1					1		1	1		1		1		
	Organising live & on-demand webinars	6	1					1		4								
	Organising conferences/workshops for presenting STEP UP innovative methods	3+	1	1						1								
	Organising Project Solution Showcase and final event	1	1															
Networking, synergies & liaison activities (disKPIs 2)	Focus groups of selected ELPs and ELPs case-study actors to assess the capacity of conditions within the case-study ELPs and ELPs to adapt to different scenarios	10						10										
	Joint press releases & statements	5								5								
Community & ecosystem building (disKPIs 3)	Joint activities with EU initiatives/projects	6+	1							5								
	Policy recommendations enabling positive externalities to dominate over negative externalities for keeping EU livestock systems within SIOs	4+	4															
	Peer-reviewed papers & conferences contributions	15	2	1	1	1		3	1		1	1		1	1	1		1
Practice abstracts following EIP-AGRI format		13	1	1	1	1		2	1		1	1		1	1	1		1
2. Communication activities																		
Full Branding & Web Design	Printable brand book and guideline	1									1							
	Website	1									1							
	Social media accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	5								5								
	Coordinated materials (poster, brochures, fact sheet)	1								1								
	Notebook, folder, roll-ups, banners and stickers	1								1								
	Social media kit (feed and story templates, video covers)	1								1								
Digital & Social Media	Unique website pageviews	25000										25000						
	No. of views/downloads (audio-visual material, brochures, etc.)	1500										1500						
	Bounce rate (%)	<40%										<40%						
	Blog posts (incl. editorial infographics and insights from market and policy experts)	70+										70						
	Social media followers	2000										2000						
	Newsletter subscribers	500+										500+						
Press Outreach & Event Planning	Avg. click-to-open rate	20-30%										20-30%						
	Editorial backlinks in top-tier online magazine outlets	20										20						
	Press releases	10+										10						
	Speeches/ interviews (TV, radio)	5+	2								1	1		1				
Featured articles in magazines		20	4								13	1	1	1				
3. Exploitation activities																		
Ecosystem building with consumers, retailers, and other industry partners for sustained uptake of the STEP UP solutions	STEP UP sustainability catalogue	1																
	or workshops	2																
	Policy Recommendations	4+																
	Motifs/ tools signed with investors and other potential partners	6																

Figure 23: Sheet for KPI distribution per partner in STEP UP

4.2. Reporting Templates

Within STEP UP's Work Packages 7-9 (WP7-9), regular monitoring of all dissemination and communication activities will occur. To facilitate this, a clear distinction is made between planned and executed dissemination and communication activities.

To maintain an effective record of these activities, two types of documents will be available:

- Documents accessible to the entire consortium.
- Internal tracking documents primarily accessible to WP7-9 leaders.

For the planning of activities, WP7-9 leaders have created a Google Sheet where consortium members have editing access. In this sheet, partners can propose potential future dissemination and communication activities, such as events, media outreach opportunities, blog post topics, and scientific publications. In addition to inputting activities in the planning Google Sheet, partners are required to notify the WP7-9 team via email of any upcoming activities for which they seek support or promotion.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1		Partner	Type of event	Description of activity (event)	Name of activity (event)	Place of activity (event)	Date of activity (event)	Channels used to promote STEP UP	Type of audience (event)	Size of audience	Coverage level	Feedback and impact	Visual proof of activity	Note
2	1													
3	2													
4	3													
5	4													
6	5													
7	6													
8	7													
9	8													
10	9													
11	10													
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21	20													
22	21													
23	22													
24	23													
25	24													
26	25													
27	26													
28	27													

+ Co-organization of one-off conferences, cross visits, data webinars and on-demand presentations Networking, synergies & liaison activities Digital & So

Figure 24: : Snippet of STEP UP planning sheet for D&C activities

Upon completion of dissemination and communication activities, partners are mandated to complete the Google Form titled "STEP UP - D&C KPI Reporting Sheet." Within this form, partners are required to provide pertinent details through a questionnaire, including the type of dissemination or communication activity, event date/time and location, activity impact, target audience and attendance figures, dissemination materials distributed, event visuals, etc.

Subsequently, the WP7-9 team will record these dissemination and communication activities in a log, referencing KPIs where partners, in addition to FSH as WP7-9 leaders, have obligations to fulfill. This document is accessible to all partners, with editing access reserved for the coordinating team and the WP7-9 team.

5. Exploitation, IPR Management Strategy & Sustainability

STEP UP will produce several commercial and non-commercial project's exploitable results. This chapter provides an introduction to project's Key Exploitable Results (KERs), STEP UP general approach to potential pathways for their exploitation and KPIs for monitoring their impact. To enhance clarity and timeliness in capitalizing on and ensuring the sustainability of STEP UP's results, a more comprehensive approach will be presented in the forthcoming document, D7.2 - *Progress pathways for exploitation and IP – initial version* scheduled for release in Month 18 of the project implementation. This document will further elaborate on the exploitation component of the DEC plan, providing additional details regarding the project's sustainability beyond STEP UP's 48-month duration. The Exploitation strategy is systematically developed and will be refined through iterative sprints.

5.1. Methodology

To ensure widespread adoption of the project outcomes and maximize their impact, it's imperative to strategically plan and develop a robust methodology for Sustainability, Exploitation, and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Management. This methodology provides a comprehensive framework for essential activities to be carried out. The forthcoming exploitation and IP-related activities will be based on this methodology, with the flexibility to adapt and refine as necessary to optimize the implementation of the STEP UP solutions.

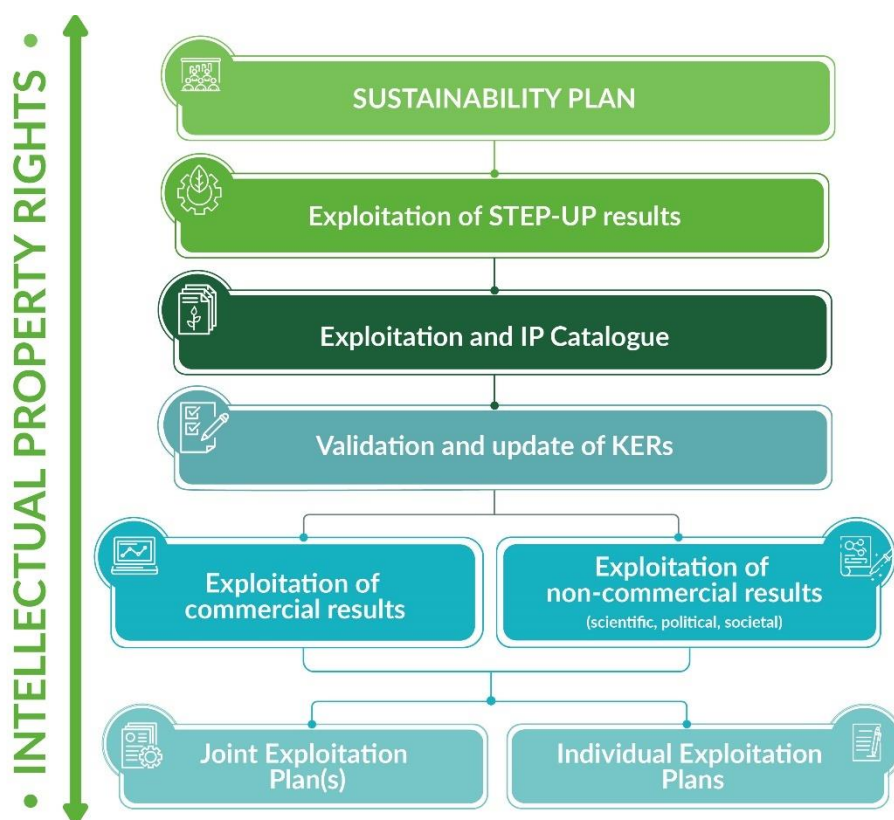


Figure 25: STEP UP Exploitation Strategy

The general approach to Sustainability, IPR management, and Exploitation in the STEP UP project is illustrated in Figure 25, with key segments outlined below.

Sustainability Strategy

The sustainability strategy delineates a specific set of measures and actions to ensure the continued use and exploitation of both commercial and non-commercial outcomes of the project. These actions aim to ensure that project results are utilized by partners and stakeholders, thereby enhancing sustainability and extending

impact beyond the project's conclusion. Long-term planning is essential to foster stakeholder engagement and attract potential investors.

Exploitation and IPCatalogue

STEP UP anticipates the development of several commercial and non-commercial outcomes identified during the Proposal Preparation Phase and outlined in the Grant Agreement. It's crucial to systematically capture, monitor, and manage outcomes throughout the project lifecycle.

In order to identify and systematically validate Key Exploitable Results (KERs), but also other results that are foreseen in the project, STEP UP will develop an online template - *STEP UP Exploitation and IP Catalogue*.

The aim of the Catalogue is to capture both tangible and intangible outcomes (knowledge or information; commercial and non-commercial) that have a potential to be exploited once the project finishes. It will also cover all potential applications of project results (scientific, societal, and economic) and briefly highlight partners' future exploitation and IP strategies and intentions. Because of the innovation-oriented character of the project, the practice of compiling the Catalogue is envisioned to be a comprehensive, iterative, and continuing process. The final findings will be reported in D9.5 *Strategy for exploitation, sustainability, & legacy uptake* in M48.

STEP UP Sustainability Catalogue

The STEP UP Sustainability Catalogue, which will encompass a comprehensive, evidence-based compilation of key project achievements will compile the project outcomes, and will benefit all identified target groups (along with relevant project partners), with particular emphasis on policymakers. Furthermore, all STEP UP solutions will be made available and actively encouraged for further implementation and testing in local innovation projects and networks. Figure 26 visually illustrates the STEP UP Sustainability Catalogue, initially comprising key project achievements. However, considering the anticipated generation of additional outcomes, these will also be documented and evaluated throughout the project, potentially being incorporated into the Catalogue.

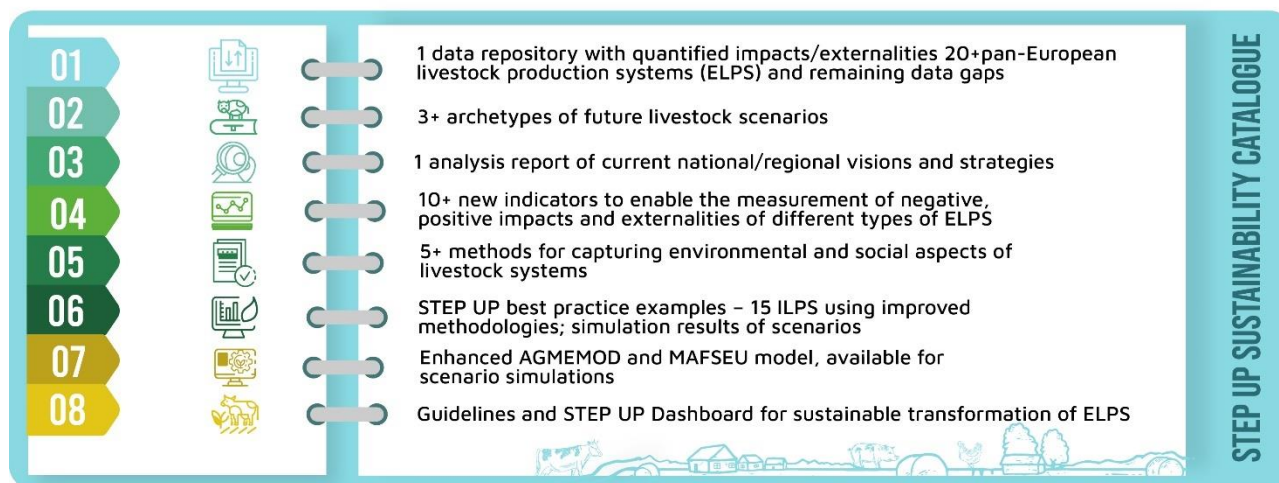


Figure 26: STEP UP Sustainability catalogue

Exploitation of Non-Commercial Results

Non-commercial results are not meant to be exploited on the market; however, their non-profit driven exploitation is very important in order to make them available to target stakeholders who can benefit from them. Therefore, such exploitation routes will also be investigated and elaborated in the context of STEP UP Exploitation strategy. Non-commercial results can provide value to **scientific and research community, policy makers and broader society**:

- **Scientific advances/re-use:** Scientific outputs such as models, methods, prototypes, and any available data generated throughout the course of the project can be utilized by the scientific community for future research.
- **Policy-making:** Project results may provide policy-makers and regulators with evidence-based information that can be useful in the process of forming new policies or changing existing ones.
- **Training and education:** Some of the results can be used to develop education and training programs for students, professionals and/or the general public.
- **Contribution to new standards** related to livestock practices/technologies, etc.

STEP UP scientific breakthroughs are expected to be exploited (i) under other existing research activities, (ii) under new research projects (in collaboration with third parties or not), and/or (iii) for educational/training purposes (specifically in the case of universities aiming to increase higher education attraction and release high quality professionals).

Rules or restrictions on scientific exploitation may be posed by the private partners of the project so as to protect their economic interests. Such restrictions (e.g., time scale) will be applied only to the knowledge co-produced by commercial enterprises and research organizations.

Exploitation of Commercial Results

Most of the STEP UP results will be utilised for non-commercial purpose, however, there is also a possibility of achieving commercial interests that will be further investigated during the project.

In order to prepare project partners interested in commercialization of their assets for market entry, the following needs to be elaborated:

- Market analysis to understand market dynamics, competition, and stakeholder needs.
- Go-to-market strategy focusing on product-market fit, target audience, and distribution channels.
- Exploration of funding opportunities to support project beneficiaries in securing funding that can ensure financial sustainability of their business solutions.
- Development of joint and individual business plans structured to include value propositions, market insights, operations, IPR considerations, and lean business models.

By project's end, final agreements on exploitation and sustainability for all outcomes (both commercial and non-commercial), along with individual exploitation pathways, will be presented in the final deliverable, *D9.5 Strategy for exploitation, sustainability, & legacy uptake* in M48.

5.2. IPR Management

Like any other asset, IP needs to be managed and used strategically to ensure smooth cooperation and maximise the impact of project results. Hence, IP management plays an essential part in the entire lifecycle

of research and innovation projects funded under the European Commission's Horizon Europe Framework Programme. Overall, STEP UP IPR Management Strategy is expected to:

- Increase the overall IP knowledge of all Consortium Members.
- Identify and provide a clear picture of the partner's existing IP.
- Identify potential ways for IP Protection.
- Facilitate the development of a joint IP management and exploitation strategy.
- Prevent potential IP conflicts between the Consortium Members but also between 3rd parties (e.g., IP infringement).
- Enhance the Project's overall Plan for the Exploitation and Dissemination of Results.

Against this background, STEP UP will adopt a comprehensive IPR Management Strategy taking into account all five distinct project stages/phases identified, working in lockstep with the Exploitation Strategy. The phases of the IPR Management Strategy and the corresponding activities are demonstrated at the Figure 27.

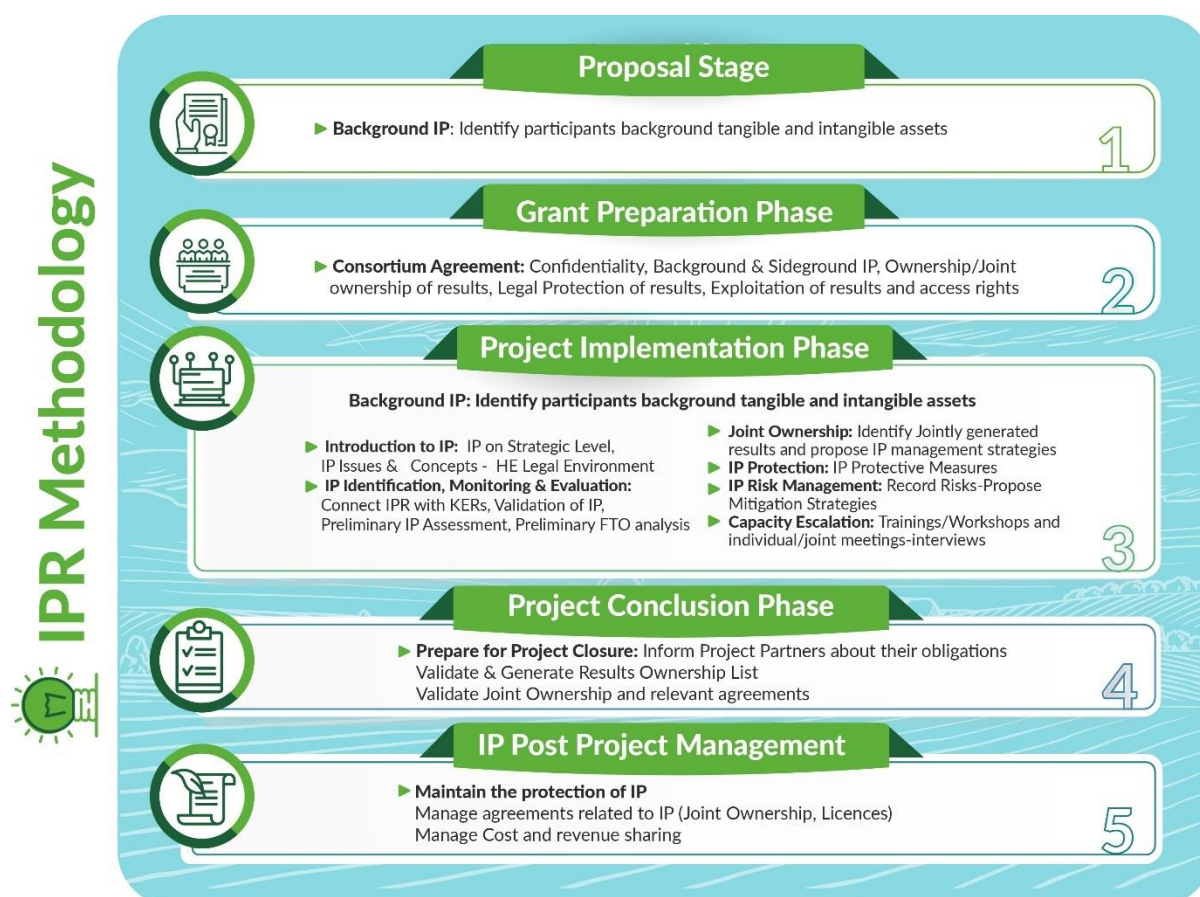


Figure 27: IPR Management Strategy

Outlined below are the details of the five distinct project stages/phases:

1. Project Planning / Proposal Stage:

All project participants background, tangible and intangible assets (i.e., scientific studies, methods, materials), and the potential IPRs attached to them (i.e., patent, copyright), likely to be needed for the implementation of the project and/or for the use of the expected results subject to IPR have been already taken under consideration during the proposal formulation. Assets of interest gathered, will be used in order to formulate the first Preliminary Results Ownership List.

2. Grant Preparation:

Matters related to management of knowledge and IPR handling (Confidentiality, Background & Sideground IP, Ownership/Joint ownership of results, Legal Protection of results, Exploitation of results and access rights) are defined in the Consortium Agreement (CA). **Results Ownership:** Each participant will own the results it generates. **Joint ownership:** When results are generated jointly, the partners in question will determine their respective share of the innovation and a Joint Ownership agreement will be signed establishing the basis for future exploitation.

3. Project Implementation:

Several activities are foreseen to take place during the implementation of the Project. More specifically, the IP management strategy is expected to focus on the following:

3.1. Introduction to IPR:

At the first stage, all Project Partners will get familiar with the basic concepts of IP and IPR, taking under consideration the following:

- Intellectual Property Concepts and Definitions on Strategic Level;
- Main Intellectual Property Issues & Concepts;
- Legal Environment of Horizon Europe.

3.2. IP Identification, Monitoring & Evaluation:

Connecting IP and Key Exploitable Results: The first action will include the further validation of KERs and their connection with IPR activities. Project's KERs will be recording in STEP UP Exploitation and IP Catalogue. It is crucial to have a clear picture of all the KERs, for instance their nature and type (e.g., software, hardware, service), their commercial potential (e.g., in terms of geographical targeting) in order to align KERs with the IP strategy and provide useful feedback.

IP Identification, Monitoring: Newly generated knowledge/innovations and related new IP, will be constantly recorded and assessed. Overall, the most suitable protection of IP depends on the character of the results. Therefore, it is essential to compile a complete list of the background, sideground and the expected results (foreground) of the project to properly manage IP and support the preparation of the exploitation activities, as well as to provide input for the **Results Ownership List** needed for the final periodic report.

This will be done in the form of a preliminary **IP Assessment** (using a questionnaire), a systematic review of the IP owned and brought to the project, IP generated during the project including possible joint IP development and joint ownership. Furthermore, a **tailored and individualized analysis** for each project partner will be implemented resulting in the development of an **individual IP Profiles**.

Based on these profiles, we will be able to map and assess the current status of each partner in terms of project innovations, internal processes related to IP management (e.g., internal IP policies, security, as well as an internal IP self-assessment), while we can group project partners in terms of maturity and implement customised actions providing individualised information.

Joint Ownership: It is crucial to identify Jointly generated results and propose IP management strategies. For that reason, the following issues should be identified and tackled accordingly:

- Identification of joint owners
- Allocation of shares (i.e., equally split, split in proportion to individual contributions)
- Conditions of non-commercial use of jointly owned IP
- Conditions of commercial exploitation of jointly used IP
- Rules on licensing/sub-licensing, transfer of shares
- IP protection and maintenance
- IP monitoring and enforcement
- Governing law and jurisdiction

IP Protection: Protection of results is essential since an effective exploitation depends on it. Thus, STEP UP participants must assess the possibility of protecting their results once these are generated, identified and evaluated in the context of IPR Management Strategy. Should the results be reasonably expected to be commercially or industrially exploited and their protection possible, reasonable and justified, then participants must provide for adequate protection of the results during an appropriate period and in a suitable territory. Thus, although **IP protection is vital for a prospective commercial or industrial exploitation**, on the other hand it is not always mandatory.

The choice of the most **suitable form of IP protection**, as well as the duration and geographical coverage depends on the results at stake (e.g., whether it is an invention, software or a database), but also the business plans for their exploitation and legitimate interests of consortium partners.

In this context, the IPR Management Strategy will establish the tools and mechanisms to facilitate Project Partners to make informed decisions about the potential protection of their IP. STEP UP is expected to identify and propose **IP protective measures**, based on project partner's needs (e.g., Joint ownership), as well as based on different technologies, end-products etc. that will be generated during the project. In the table below, some of the preliminary IP protective measures are presented.

Subject Matter	Patent	Utility Model	New (Industrial) Design	Copyright	Trademark	Trade Secret
Invention	x	x				
Software	x					
Scientific Article				x		
Design of a Product				x		
Name of a Product			x	x	x	
Name of a product / Service / Project					x	
Know-how						x
Website			x	x	x	

Table 5 Indicative Protection Measures

IP Risk Management: Risk is the possibility or likelihood of harm, loss, or less-than-expected returns. The primary reason for risk identification and management is to assure that program decision-makers learn about and deal with important risks before they turn into issues. Risks related to IP fall into multiple categories that can pose threats to program schedules, cost, and scope performance.

Therefore, we need to frame the facts of the risks and determine what actions might mitigate or lessen their impacts. For this reason, **potential risks connected with IP will be recorded, analysed and evaluated**. Based on this analysis, mitigation actions and strategies will be proposed. The IP risk activities will work in lockstep with the overall Project Risk Management, Assessment and Mitigation Strategy.

Capacity Escalation Activities will also take place. The first IP workshop on general IP considerations that STEP UP consortium needs to take into account during the implementation of the project, including background/foreground knowledge, access rights, IP protection measures and connections between IP management and exploitation & dissemination activities will take place in M4, while the second workshop will take place close to the end of the Project, where the bulk of information related to IP will be available. In the meantime, FSH as leader of Exploitation and IP activities will be available for individual mentoring support for project partners who might need additional, tailor-made assistance regarding their IP issues.

4. Project Conclusion: Project partners must be aware that obligations concerning IP management and certain provisions in the agreements remain in force after the project conclusion such as confidentiality obligations, transfer of results, obligations to protect results capable of commercial exploitation. In this

D7.1 – DEC Plan

context, when approaching the end of the Project, all Project Partners will be informed about their obligations and next steps while will also **verify the Results Ownership List** in the context of the **2nd IP workshop**.

5. IP Post Project Management: The obligations for project partners also remain active after the end of the project. Therefore, the following issues will be taken under consideration:

- How to maintain the protection of IP
- How to manage agreements related to IP (Joint Ownership, Licenses)
- How to manage Cost and revenue sharing.

6. Conclusion

D7.1, the first DEC Plan, introduces the initial DEC plan, providing an extensive outline of the dissemination, exploitation, and communication strategy. It tentatively lays out key phases and planning guidelines, covering a wide range of activities aimed at achieving DEC targets. The document also outlines reporting and monitoring methods for these activities in a preliminary manner. Main tools to reach Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the project's target audience are described. This DEC plan will undergo empirical improvements during the initial period of the STEP UP project.

To maximize the project's impact during its duration and beyond, all partners are expected to actively participate in disseminating and communicating specific outputs of STEP UP. This engagement contributes to the project's DEC objectives and ensures the proper exploitation of its outcomes.

DEC plan II (D8.1) is scheduled for completion by Month 36. It will be presented as a report, offering an updated version of the DEC plan and detailing the relevant activities of tasks scheduled for the project's continuation.

Progress pathways for exploitation and IP (D7.2) is due by Month 18. This report will identify concise and timely methods for capitalizing on and ensuring the sustainability of project results.

7. Annexes

Annex 1 Preliminary list of European-wide associations and organisations

Organisation	Description
American Society of Dairy Science	ADSA is an international organization of educators, scientists, and industry representatives who are committed to advancing the dairy industry and keenly aware of the vital role the dairy sciences play in fulfilling the economic, nutritive, and health requirements of the world's population.
The Animal Task Force (ATF)	A European Public-Private Partnership of research organisations and farmer and industry organisations, working together on a sustainable and competitive European livestock production sector by fostering knowledge development and innovation in the whole animal production chain.
EURAGRI	A not-for-profit organization that acts as a forum for representatives from public research and innovation institutes, universities, funding bodies and ministries engaged in research and innovation in the agri-food sector and the broader bioeconomy. It encourages and stimulates debate on relevant research and innovation policy issues of strategic importance on EU, member state and organizational level.

Annex 2 Preliminary overview of scanned Projects and Initiatives

Project	Description
Pathways to Sustainable Food	PATHWAYS is a 5-year (2021-2026), €9 million Horizon 2020 project aiming to reduce environmental impacts while addressing societal demands for safe, nutritious and affordable meat and dairy products by identifying and increasing sustainable practices along the supply and production chains of the European livestock sector. The co-ordinator and a number of key partners in Pathways are leading workpackages within the STEP UP project.
ReLivestock	The overall objective of Re-Livestock is to understand and mobilize adoption of innovative practices, applied cross-scale (animal, herd/farm, sector and region), to reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of livestock farming and to increase the capacity for dealing with climate change impacts, in order to ultimately increase the overall resilience of the livestock sector. STEP UP will complement ongoing and planned initiatives within ReLivestock, particularly in relation to the identification and development of practical farm based indicator of sustainable livestock production systems including improved indices of animal welfare, environmental biodiversity, GHG emissions and human health promoting attributes of livestock derived food products.

FOODCoST	FOODCoST aims to support the transition towards a sustainable food system by proposing a harmonised methodology for the valuation and internalisation of externalities along the food value chain based on economic cost principles. FOODCoST will provide tools and guidance to policymakers, businesses and other actors to assess the sustainable impacts fostered by the implementation of business and policy measures that address the externality issues. The project started in June 2022 and will run until 2026.
Brightspace	The ambition and overarching objective of BRIGHTSPACE is to address the challenge of by designing effective and sustainable strategies to navigate within a SJOS. BrightSpace provides an analytical toolbox to experiment, analyse, and coordinate the effects of innovative technologies, governance structures, as well as short- and long-term policies related to agriculture, thereby allowing for the execution of consistent, coherent, and lasting strategies with the desired consequences.
Holoruminant	Holoruminant is a multi-actor project aiming to elucidate the role of ruminant-associated microbiomes and their interplay with the host animal in early life and throughout fundamental life events that are known to affect health, welfare and environmental efficiency in ruminant production systems. HoloRuminant will use a holistic multi-omics approach to characterize the establishment and dynamics of microbiomes. In this way, HoloRuminant will determine the connectivity between microbiomes from different body sites, their heritability and their influence on the host's key performance indices (KPIs) of efficiency of production, growth, resistance to disease, methane emissions, carbon footprint and phenotypic resilience to changing environmental conditions. The co-ordinator and a number of other partners on the STEP UP proposal are members of the Holoruminant consortium and animal health, nutrition, welfare and GHG emissions related innovations developed as part of the latter will be utilised (i.e. as bio-indicators in WP3), where appropriate withn STEP UP.
BovINE Network Project 2020-2022	The aim of BovINE was to create accessible and tested information for beef farmers for implementation 'on farm' to drive sustainability. To achieve this aim, BovINE Practice Abstracts (PAs) have been created and are freely available on the BovINE Knowledge Hub (BKH). The co-ordinator of Bovine is a partner in the STEP UP consortium and learnings in terms of the multiactor approach, stakeholder engagement and the management of case studies will be applied to STEP UP.

STELAR	STELAR (HORIZON-CL4-2021-DATA-01, ID: 101070122, 2022-2025) will design, develop, evaluate, and showcase an innovative Knowledge Lake Management System (KLMS) to support and facilitate a holistic approach for FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) and AI-ready (high-quality, reliably labeled) data.
VALPRO Path	VALPRO Path (HORIZON-CL6-2021-FARM2FORK-01; ID: 101059824; 2022-2026) will design, validate and deliver sustainable and competitive plant protein crop systems and value chains. Focussed on underpinning economic value for all actors in the supply chain, it will exploit beyond state-of-the-art innovations, demonstrating and evaluating potential across 5 multi-stakeholder 'living lab' innovation production systems (IPSs). The project will deliver a stronger ecosystem for plant protein production, supported with robust evidence of the social, economic, environmental, climate and health benefits.

Annex 3 Media outlets example overview

Media outlet	Short description
Wikifarmer	A global platform dedicated to empowering farmers by providing education and offering direct access to the commercial markets, ensuring fair prices for their products.
AgTechNavigator	Delivers daily news, analysis, insights, online and face to face events, podcasts and video coverage of the issues and stories impacting decision makers in the agri-tech and agri-food sectors across the globe.
Forum Akademickie	A Polish monthly information and journalistic magazine addressed to the academic community. Published since 1991 (initially as "Przegląd Akademicki").
RTV (Radio Television of Vojvodina)	RTV is a public broadcasting service of Vojvodina that produces and broadcasts high-quality television, radio and multimedia programming in Serbian and minority languages which informs, educates and entertains the population of Vojvodina and also helps to maintain the region's unique diversity.
Farmers Journal Ireland	The Irish Farmers Journal is a weekly newspaper which provides farming news, specialist advice, market data and country living features to the Irish agricultural industry.
AgriLand	Digital news publisher in the agricultural sector in Ireland. The aim is to bring together in one online resource all the information, news and services required by people involved in the agricultural and farming sectors in Ireland.