



COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



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Document History

Revisions

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[Be aware that the information within this Communication Strategy is subject to change and based on the information provided by CINEA.]

TABLE OF CONTENT

Glossary and Abbreviations	4
1. Introduction	6
1.1. Document Purpose and Scope.....	6
1.2. Applicable Documents	6
1.3. GDPR Guidelines	7
1.4. Images & Image Rights.....	8
1.5. EU Branding and Guidelines.....	9
1.6. Sustainable Communication	10
1.6.1. Communication principles	10
1.6.2. SMART communication.....	11
2. Internal Project Communication.....	13
2.1. Internal Project Webpage.....	13
2.2. Communication and Education Working Group.....	14
2.2.1. Communication Working Group	14
2.2.2. Education Working Group.....	15
3. Communication and Dissemination Strategy.....	16
3.1. Communication Strategy Goals	16
3.2. Intended Target Audiences and Stakeholders.....	17
3.3. Key Messages.....	19
4. Tools of Communication and Dissemination Strategy.....	21
4.1. Harmonised Branding	21
4.2. Defined Actions and Channels	26
4.2.1. Web Presence and digital evidence	26
4.2.2. Press Activities.....	27
4.2.3. Project Publications.....	28
4.2.4. Event Organisation.....	29
4.2.5. Networking and Awareness Raising	30
4.2.6. Educational Activities	31
5. Assessment of Communication Actions	32
5.1. Expected Impacts.....	32
5.2. Deliverables.....	34
5.3. Milestones.....	35
5.4. Impact Monitoring and Evaluation of Communication Activities.....	35
5.4.1. Impact Monitoring Tools.....	35
5.4.2. Impact Monitoring Indicators	37
6. Conclusion and Future Communication Actions	38

7. ANNEX I.....	40
7.1. Project Description	40
7.2. Project Event Calendar.....	40
7.3. Project Kick-Off Press Release	42
Figure 1: ARTICLE 17 of ANNEX5 of the Grant Agreement (Source: GA , p.37)	7
Figure 2: Internal Project Webpage - Homepage (Source: liferestore.eu).....	13
Figure 3: GPO F and its SPOs structure.....	16
Figure 4: Stakeholder Environment of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project.....	17
Figure 5: Chosen fonts of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD CI: Bebas Neue and DM Sans	21
Figure 6: Colour palette of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD CI	21
Figure 7: LIFE RESTORE for MDD project design element.....	22
Figure 8: Logo strips of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD partner consortium (both versions)	23
Figure 9: Logo strip of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD Co-financiers.....	23
Figure 10: Example of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD E-Mail Signature	24
Figure 11: Roll-Ups in the project CI.....	25
Figure 12: Branded T-Shirts in the project CI	25
Figure 13: Project kick-off Instagram posting example (Source: WWF-AT Instagram Channel).....	26
Table 1: Communication Impact Table (Source: GA)	34
Table 2: Deliverables for WP7 (Source: GA).....	35
Table 3: Milestones for WP7 (Source: GA).....	35

GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

BEN	Beneficiary
CD/CI	Corporate Design / Corporate Identity
CINEA	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
CM	Communication Manager
COO BEN	Coordinating Beneficiary
CWG	Communication Working Group
CWG	Communication Working Group
EC	European Commission
EWG	Education Working Group
GA	Grant Agreement
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GPO	General Project Objectives
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
KPI	Key Project Indicators
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NC	National Coordinator
PC	Project Consortium
PMH	Project Management Handbook
PSC	Project Steering Committee
Sub-T.	Sub-Task
SPO	Specific Project Objectives
T	Task
TBR MDD	Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube
TBR MDD SC	Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube Steering Committee (Advisory Board)
TtT	Train-the-Trainer
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Package

PROJECT PARTNERS (ALPHABETICAL):

BfNPI	BALATON-FELVIDÉKI NEMZETI PARK IGAZGATÓSÁG (DIRECTORATE)
DDNPI	DUNA-DRÁVA NEMZETI PARK IGAZGATÓSÁG (DIRECTORATE)
FAZOS	SVEUČILIŠTE JOSIPA JURJA STROSSMAYERA U OSIJEKU, FAKULTET AGROBIOTEHNIČKIH ZNANOSTI OSIJEK
GO	UDRUGA ZA ZAŠTITU PRIRODE I OKOLIŠA ZELENI OSIJEK
HV	HRVATSKE VODE PRAVNA OSOBA ZA UPRAVLJANJE VODAMA
IRSNC	ZAVOD REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE ZA VARSTVO NARAVE
JU KKZ	JAVNA USTANOVA ZA UPRAVLJANJE ZAŠTIĆENIM DIJELOVIMA PRIRODE NA PODRUČJU KOPRIVNIČKO KRIŽEVAČKE ŽUPANIJE
JU MP	MEĐIMURSKA PRIRODA - JAVNA USTANOVA ZA ZAŠTITU PRIRODE
JU VP	JAVNA USTANOVA ZA UPRAVLJANJE ZAŠTIĆENIM DIJELOVIMA PRIRODE I EKOLOŠKOM MREŽOM VIROVITIČKO-PODRAVSKE ŽUPANIJE
JU ZDP VZ	JAVNA USTANOVA ZA UPRAVLJANJE ZAŠTIĆENIM DIJELOVIMA PRIRODE VARAŽDINSKE ŽUPANIJE
RMSO	REGIONALMANAGEMENT SÜDOSTSTEIERMARK STEIRISCHES VULKANLAND GMBH
SiDG	SLOVENSKI DRŽAVNI GOZDOVI, D. O. O.
STMK	AMT DER STEIERMARK LANDESREGIERUNG
SWA	DIREKCIJA REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE ZA VODE
VSUME	JAVNO PREDUZEĆE VOJVODINAŠUME, PETROVARADIN
WWF AT	WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE, AUSTRIA
WWF HU	WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE, HUNGARY

1. INTRODUCTION

"LIFE RESTORE for MDD - Preserving and restoring floodplain forest habitats along the Mura-Drava-Danube rivers" focuses on the conservation and restoration of the largest contiguous floodplain forest system in the Danube River Basin. The multi-sectoral project consortium (PC), which includes water managers, nature conservationists, foresters, protected area managers, regional managers and NGOs, will implement a transboundary restoration effort at 29 sites along three rivers.

This will include restoring river morphology, connecting side channels, restoring oxbows and improving or reforesting natural forests, supported by integrative transboundary river restoration planning. Communication, awareness raising, education and monitoring will accompany the restoration efforts.

1.1. DOCUMENT PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document describes the communication plan and activities within the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project, with a special focus on all planned activities and planned impacts related to *Work Package 7 (WP 7) - Dissemination, Communication, Education and Awareness Raising*.

More specifically, it aims to describe how the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project, its activities, outputs and results will be disseminated and promoted in the Mura-Drava-Danube Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (TBR MDD) and beyond, to the local population of the TBR MDD and to the interested public throughout the Danube basin.

It then illustrates the initial communication materials produced by the LIFE RESTORE for MDD PC (logo, template, website) during the first months of activity. It also provides an overview of the evaluation methods identified for the communication activities.

The communication plan will be updated throughout the duration of the project.

1.2. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

The Communication Strategy is based on the following documents, which are binding on all beneficiaries (BENs):

- [Grant Agreement](#)¹ (GA) and its annexes (linked to document Ref. Areas (2023)4374019 – 23/06/2023), signed between the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), under the authority delegated by the European Commission (EC).
- [Annotated Grant Agreement EU](#)² (current version)
- [Consortium Agreement](#)³
- [The Project Management Handbook](#)⁴ (current version)
- Call documents, e.g. guidelines.

¹ Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]

² Annotated Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/13Cu0gQQn4p-rZ9u7UWFejp2Kt0z6wwyc/view?usp=drive_link]

³ Consortium Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UI6JudptB7i9w7AUMuXGxPHWvL6Jlby5/view?usp=drive_link]

⁴ Project Management Handbook [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iL9_RPigVX2SV6V5-n8mcjX9E2d4d0u/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=105640073056720385813&rtpof=true&sd=true]

In addition, the Communication Strategy is linked, whenever appropriate, to the [internal project webpage](#)⁵ - liferestore.eu, where current project-relevant information, links and templates can be found.

ARTICLE 17 — COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY

17.1 Communication — Dissemination — Promoting the action

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, the beneficiaries must promote the action and its results by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in accordance with Annex 1 and in a strategic, coherent and effective manner.

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the granting authority.

Figure 1: ARTICLE 17 of ANNEX5 of the Grant Agreement (Source: [GA](#), p.37)

1.3. GDPR GUIDELINES

All BENs of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) during the project implementation.

The CINEA Guidelines on Data Protection and further information can be found at the following links:

- [GDPR Regulation](#)
- [Guidelines and Q&As on GDPR](#)
- [Information on GDPR for companies and organisations](#)
- [List of national data protection authorities](#)

To ensure the proper implementation of the GDPR and safety of personal information, all BENs have to include following disclaimers when organizing public events.

On lists of participants:

*"With your signature you give us permission to take photographs and/or videos of you at the event and to use them for purposes which may include advertising, promotion and marketing. Such use includes the display, distributions, publications, transmissions or otherwise use of photographs, images and/or videos taken for use in materials that include, but may not be limited to our printed materials, such as brochures, newsletters, videos and digital images used on websites and social media pages, such as Facebook. We may alter or modify images of you and combine such images, text, audio recordings and graphics without notifying you. **A person attending a LIFE RESTORE for MDD project event who does not wish to have his/her image recorded for distribution, should make this wish known to the event organisers.** This collection of your personal information is intended only for the express purpose of organising and managing the event, as well as for the reimbursement procedure. We are committed to respect and protect the privacy of personal data collected. We regard your personal data as confidential information. The information collected may be disseminated electronically or on paper and conferred to other participants in the interest of facilitating communication among them, proving their attendance with the signature list to EU-funded control systems, as well as for the promotion of future events on this subject or on similar subjects."*

⁵ Internal project webpage [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/home?authuser=0>]

On registration forms:

*"The collection of personal information is for the express purpose of organising and managing the event. We, the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project consortium, are committed to respecting and protecting the privacy of the personal information collected. We consider your personal data to be confidential information and will never share it with third parties. This information may be disseminated electronically or on paper and shared with other participants in order to facilitate communication between them, to prove their participation with the signature list for EU-funded control systems, and to promote future events on this and related topics. With your registration you give us permission to take photographs and/or videos of you at the event and to use them for purposes which may include advertising, promotion and marketing. **A person attending a LIFE RESTORE for MDD project event who does not wish to have his/her image recorded for distribution, should make this wish known to the event organisers.**"*

On newsletter subscription:

"By subscribing to this newsletter, you agree to receive the LIFE RESTORE for MDD Project newsletter issues in your email inbox from time to time. We are committed to respecting and protecting the privacy of the personal information we collect. We treat your personal information as confidential and will never share it with third parties. Your personal information will only be used for the express purpose of receiving the newsletter."

1.4. IMAGES & IMAGE RIGHTS

All photos used within the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project must be cleared in terms of use of image rights and freely shared within the whole PC as well as with the EU funding bodies.

A selection of images within the WWF-AT catalogue was made by the Coordinating Beneficiary (COO BEN) at the beginning of the project and shared on the [internal project webpage](#)⁶.

It is desired that all BENs share any relevant photographic material with the COO BEN to be included in this selection, so that the whole consortium has a maximum selection of photos to use for dissemination and communication purposes.

Concerning the use of photos taken by BENs during the project: Each BEN is obliged to fill in the WWF-AT template [Agreement granting non-exclusive rights](#)⁷ each time they provide photos for project purposes.

In addition, for any photo or video material to be used by a professional photographer, there must be a signed [Contract for the provision of the use of image material](#)⁸ or another contract similar to this one to ensure that all BENs as well as the EU are granted rights of use.

⁶ Internal project webpage [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/home?authuser=0>]

⁷ Agreement granting non-exclusive rights [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PcG4VU-tcXx0bh3SDQWV9dnH9bRQFOXm/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=105640073056720385813&rtpof=true&sd=true]

⁸ Contract for the provision of the use of image material [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eHsqNFHV0lh4FVYrFAmeNBhw3_-ao400/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=105640073056720385813&rtpof=true&sd=true]

1.5. EU BRANDING AND GUIDELINES

Details of the EU branding guidelines are shared by the [European Commission](#). In order to highlight the most important information, [Communication Guidelines](#)⁹ were produced by the COO BEN at the beginning of the project.

This guide states the following in relation to the external communication of all BENs:

Communication Activities and infrastructure, equipment or major results funded by the grant must display the following logos:

- The **LIFE** Programme logo



- For projects in **Natura 2000** sites or contributing to the integrity of Natura 2000 network: the Natura 2000 logo



The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text. When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of BENs or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

Where compatible, communication activities to promote the Activity (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), which include written content statements, must include the **funding logo** (the LIFE flag and the funding statement 'Co-financed by the European Union' - translated into local languages where appropriate).



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⁹ Communication Guidelines [https://drive.google.com/file/d/10ktJomneocpm-2XimhV0keCc9CGpSP8N/view?usp=drive_link]

In conjunction with this, all BENs are required to use the following **disclaimer**, either in English and/or in their national language, whenever they use the funding logo (the LIFE flag with the funding statement "Co-financed by the European Union").

EN

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HR

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HU

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SL

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SR

Su-finansirano sredstvima Evropske unije. Izneseni stavovi i mišljenja su stavovi i mišljenja autora i ne moraju se podudarati sa stavovima i mišljenjima Evropske unije ili CINEA. Ni Evropska unija ni CINEA ne mogu se smatrati odgovornima za njih.

1.6. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNICATION

Sustainable project communication is a strategic approach that focuses on promoting transparent, inclusive and effective dialogue throughout a project's lifecycle, with a strong emphasis on environmental, social and economic sustainability.

1.6.1. COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

The self-image of the BENs in this project is to work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way. The BENs will minimise any negative environmental impact, reduce the carbon footprint and reduce waste wherever possible. These intentions were set out in the [GA](#)¹⁰ and will be pursued in all activities.

¹⁰ Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]

The following bullet points are particularly important for the project consortium (PC):

- **Information exchange:** When exchanging information, project partners will use digital tools as much as possible.
- **Printing:** Where paper communication products are needed, at least FSC certified products will be used. The number of copies will be limited to what is really needed. Green tendering methods will be used in the procurement of services.
- **Events:** Events will be encouraged to be as paper and plastic free as possible. No single-use plastics or bottled water will be used at project meetings. Where lunches or dinners are organised at project meetings or workshops, local producers and predominantly vegetarian meals will be provided. The use of virtual meetings instead of face-to-face meetings helps to significantly reduce travel emissions, thereby contributing to environmental sustainability. Public transport should be used wherever possible.
- **Procurement:** The PC will pay attention to "green procurement" when awarding contracts. Already during the application phase, all costs have been additionally scrutinised for sustainability or replaced by alternative sustainable approaches (e.g. renting instead of buying where possible). All partners will move towards greener procurement, including all equipment purchased as part of the project, which will follow the basic principles of green public procurement. The purchase of equipment and materials in this project will be guided by the [EU's handbook on green public procurement 'Buying Green'](#)¹¹.

This project will create space for nature and improve priority habitat types, which will not only improve the quality of the protected areas:

Through existing communication processes - which will be made as sustainable as possible - the PC aims to create an understanding of the quality of life for all living things. The conservation and restoration of these habitats being green management in itself.

As part of the project, the PC aims to continuously improve the way it communicates. This includes involving stakeholders at every stage, ensuring that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed, thereby fostering trust and cooperation.

Sustainable project communication also emphasises the dissemination of accurate and timely information to enable informed decision-making and promote accountability. By integrating sustainability principles into communication strategies, projects can not only achieve their objectives efficiently, but also contribute positively to the broader goals of environmental and social responsibility.

1.6.2. SMART COMMUNICATION

The SMART communication method is an approach used to ensure that communication goals and objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. Each component of the SMART acronym serves as a guideline for creating effective and meaningful communication strategies:

1. **Specific:** Communication objectives should be clear, concise and focused on a specific outcome or goal. This involves defining exactly what needs to be achieved, who the target audience is, what message needs to be conveyed and through what channels.
2. **Measurable:** Communication objectives should be quantifiable or observable, so that progress can be tracked and evaluated. This involves establishing measurable indicators or metrics that

¹¹ "Buying Green": EU Handbook on green Procurement: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8c2da441-f63c-11e5-8529-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

can be used to assess whether communication efforts are successful in achieving the desired outcomes.

3. **Achievable:** Communication objectives should be realistic and achievable within the given resources, time frame and constraints. This includes considering the available budget, human resources, technology and other factors that may affect the feasibility of the communication plan.
4. **Relevant:** Communication objectives should be relevant to the overall goals and priorities of the organisation or project. This includes ensuring that communication efforts are consistent with the broader mission, values and strategic goals, and that they address the needs and interests of the target audience.
5. **Time-bound:** Communication objectives should have a specific timeline or deadline for achievement. This involves setting clear deadlines or milestones to create a sense of urgency and accountability, and to ensure that communication efforts are carried out in a timely manner.

By applying the SMART criteria to communication planning and implementation, the PC can improve the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of its communication strategies, ultimately leading to better results and outcomes.

2. INTERNAL PROJECT COMMUNICATION

2.1. INTERNAL PROJECT WEBPAGE

Due to the large number of BENs and stakeholders involved in the project, an internal webpage (see [Figure 2](#)) in combination with Google Drive was chosen to facilitate seamless internal communication. The webpage is facilitated by the COO BEN.

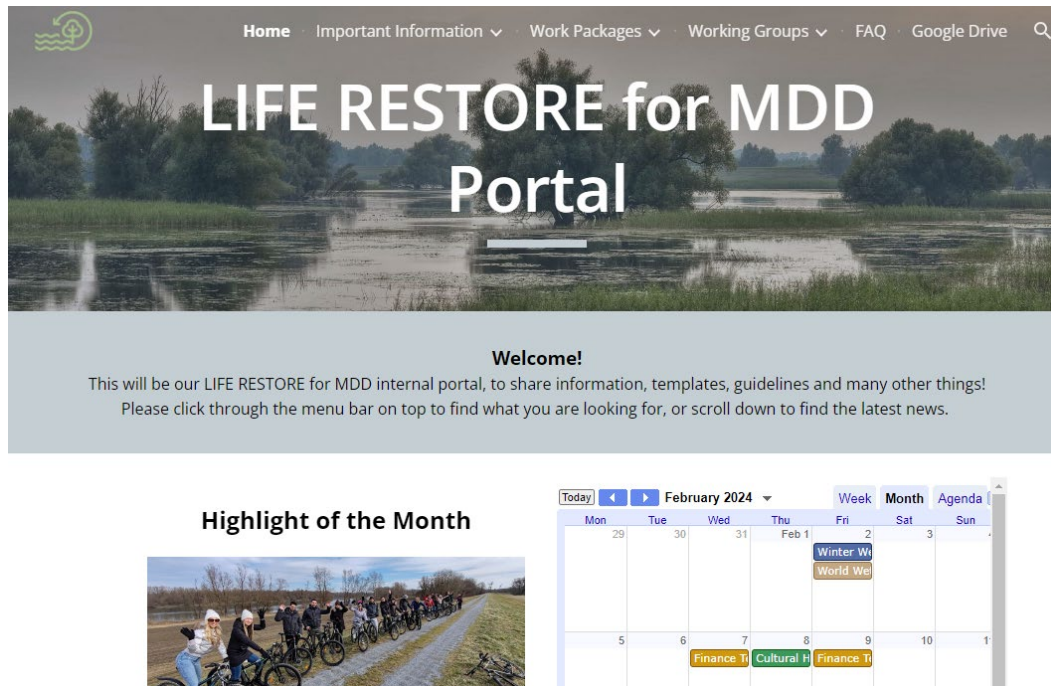


Figure 2: Internal Project Webpage - Homepage (Source: liferestore.eu)

The structure of the internal webpage, liferestore.eu¹² and its landing page, is outlined as following (all of the following pages listed are accessible directly from the main landing page).

- **Latest News and Team Calendar:** The main landing page features the latest news from the consortium and the updated project team calendar, with meetings, planned events and project deadlines.
- **Menu Bar:** Located at the top of the landing page, the menu bar displays the websites sub-pages:
 - **Important Information:**
 - Project Management: Guidelines, key documents, meeting minutes, agendas, BEN contact list.
 - Communication: Guidelines, CI/templates (including the project’s CI download centre, colour codes, etc.), background templates, logos, and the shared photo library.
 - Finance & Controlling: Training & presentations, reporting templates, key dates.

¹² Internal project webpage [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/home?authuser=0>]

- **Events Calendar:** A comprehensive calendar showcasing public holidays, meetings, public events, and project deadlines.
- **Work Packages:** This section contains information on all eight work packages, including the respective GANTT charts and deliverables.
- **Working Groups:** This contains information and minutes from all Working Group meetings. As well as concept sheets and other information on all four working groups.
- **FAQ¹³:** A selection of frequently asked questions and their corresponding answers.
- **Google Drive¹⁴:** Direct access to the project's Google Drive to browse and download files.

The webpage was developed and disseminated among the entire PC within the initial months of the project, with restricted access from the public. Additionally, for documentation purposes, the webpage will remain online for five years following the conclusion of the project.

2.2. COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

In the **GA¹⁵** of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project, it was initially stated that the Communication and Education Working Group would be formed as a single working group covering both communication and education aspects. However, during the first PC meeting held in Sombor, Serbia, in November 2023, all BENs concluded that it would be more effective to establish two separate groups: a **Communication Working Group (CWG)** and an **Education Working Group (EWG)**.

Under this new structure, the CWG will be led by WWF-AT and will be tasked with focusing on WP7 tasks as well as overseeing general project communication. This group will play a crucial role in articulating and disseminating the project's objectives and achievements. On the other hand, the EWG, led by GO, will focus on the educational aspects of the project. This separation will allow for a more focused and specialised approach in each area, ensuring that both communication and education objectives are met efficiently.

Regular meetings for both the CWG and the EWG will be scheduled, aligning with project milestones and specific needs in communication and education. The CWG will hold focused discussions, whereas the EWG meetings might be extended to thoroughly explore educational content and strategies. Each BEN will have at least one representative in the CWG. Whereas the EWG will include representatives from each BEN involved in educational tasks within the project's timeline.

2.2.1. COMMUNICATION WORKING GROUP

It is planned that the CWG will meet on a quarterly basis, either in person, online or in a hybrid format. Once a year, most likely in the autumn, the CWG will meet in person and be aligned with a general PC meeting.

¹³ FAQ Section [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/faq?authuser=0>]

¹⁴ Project Google Drive [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10BISs7hcy07tSEqHC27PUyggmkV3I2eF?usp=drive_link]

¹⁵ Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]

Each CWG meeting will focus on one or two main topics, introduced by the COO BEN and discussed by all BENs, to ensure the involvement of all BENs in major issues, such as key elements of the communication strategy like target groups and key messages, project visual materials and the information boards.

In addition, each CWG meeting will include a section to coordinate the overall project communication and to discuss current issues raised by all BENs or to provide an update on the progress of the overall project communication.

These regular meetings have been established to ensure a successful coordination of all communication issues. Together with a set of defined messages and harmonised branding, they will ensure a consistent public image of the entire PC.

2.2.2. EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

The EWG is led by GO and consists of ten partner organisations from all five countries: RMSO, IRSNC, WWF-AT, WWF-HU, DDNPI, JU MP, ZDP VZ, JU KKZ, JU VP, GO and VSUME. The mentioned organisations (except WWF-AT and DDNPI) will carry out educational activities within the project and will use the new educational programme during and after the project. The new educational programme will be developed by GO.

The EWG is scheduled to meet at least twice annually, either in-person, online, or in a hybrid format. The primary focus of these regular meetings will be to coordinate the project's educational activities in each country and exchange information on the development of the new educational programme. Additionally, three Train-the-Trainer (TtT) workshops (both face-to-face and online) are planned to ensure that all BENs possess the same level of knowledge for conducting educational activities. The workshops will focus on the newly developed educational programme within the project, including its methodology, equipment, accompanying materials, and approach to conducting new educational activities.

The educational activities are intended for several target groups, including teachers, youth workers, protected area managers, environmental educators, students/pupils, and the general population/citizens. The new educational programme will focus on the restoration of floodplain forests and river habitats. It is intended for future educators of school and student groups.

3. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

3.1. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY GOALS

The Communication Strategy for the LIFE Restore for MDD project focuses on increasing awareness and knowledge of the importance of Natura 2000 sites, a key objective identified as General Project Objective (GPO) F. To achieve this effectively, the planned approach is multi-faceted and includes several Specific Project Objectives (SPO), as shown in [Figure 3](#).

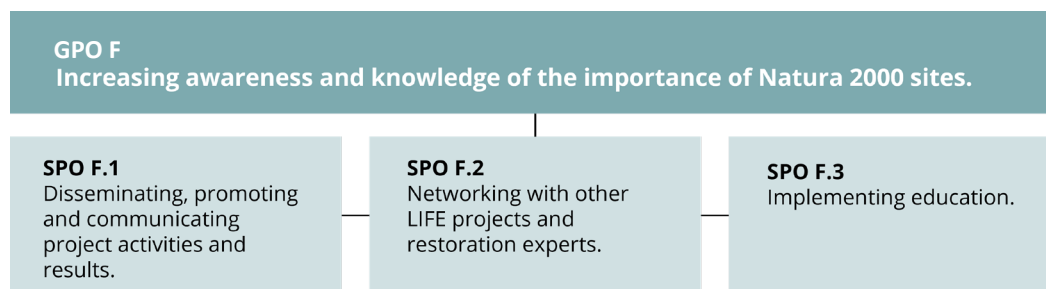


Figure 3: GPO F and its SPOs structure

SPO F.1 - Dissemination, promotion and communication of project activities and results, defines critical components of the strategy to increase public awareness and understanding of the unique floodplains. This strategy involves the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan using a range of media channels and communication materials. These include a project website, social media platforms, newsletters, press relations, press trips and information leaflets. In addition, the organisation of events and workshops is an integral part of this strategy, enabling direct engagement with the community and stakeholders.

Such multifaceted dissemination efforts aim to broaden the reach and deepen the impact of the project. By communicating activities and results through these different channels, the strategy aims to foster a stronger connection and understanding among the public and stakeholders of the importance and impact of the project in the transboundary project area.

SPO F.2 - Networking with other LIFE projects and restoration experts, is an integral part of the communication strategy and practical restoration approach. This includes establishing and maintaining links with professionals and organisations involved in similar LIFE projects, and active engagement through field trips and site visits. Visits to successful LIFE restoration projects in countries such as Germany or France facilitate a rich exchange of knowledge and experience.

These interactions are key to providing invaluable lessons in practical restoration, which contribute significantly to restoration efforts in the respective project areas. Meetings, conferences and collaborative platforms will form a robust network, acting as a cornerstone for mutual learning and sharing of best practice in restoration efforts. This collaborative approach is expected to enhance the overall effectiveness of the project, ensuring that valuable lessons are learned from both direct experience and the successes and challenges of others in the field.

SPO F.3 - The implementation of the educational tasks, focuses on the design and implementation of educational programmes and materials to inform and engage the public on the importance of Natura 2000 sites. A network of schools in the project area will be established and activated through specific school programmes based on the RIVER'SCOOL network and the Trainer's Handbook of lifeline MDD (Thinschmidt & Pavlović 2022). These initiatives aim to promote the importance of living rivers among school children. Science days will be organised with a focus on Natura 2000 sites to promote a deeper

understanding and appreciation of biodiversity and conservation efforts. Collaboration with educational institutions and environmental organisations will be crucial to extend the reach and impact of these educational initiatives. The planned activities are designed to be interactive and experiential, catering to different age groups.

In summary, the communication strategy for the LIFE Restore for MDD project is designed as a comprehensive plan that includes information dissemination, networking and educational initiatives. By defining a consistent set of communication messages, identifying target audiences and selecting appropriate communication channels, the strategy provides a clear direction. It also includes the definition of specific objectives and Key Project Indicators (KPIs), together with their evaluation criteria, in order to maximise the effectiveness of the project's communication and dissemination activities. The main objective is to increase public understanding and involvement in the importance of Natura 2000 sites.

3.2. INTENDED TARGET AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS

The LIFE RESTORE for MDD PC has an established stakeholder network. To improve communication efficiency, it is essential to categorise stakeholders and target audiences based on their needs, knowledge, and existing objectives.

The stakeholder landscape is outlined in [Figure 4](#), without claiming to be exhaustive.

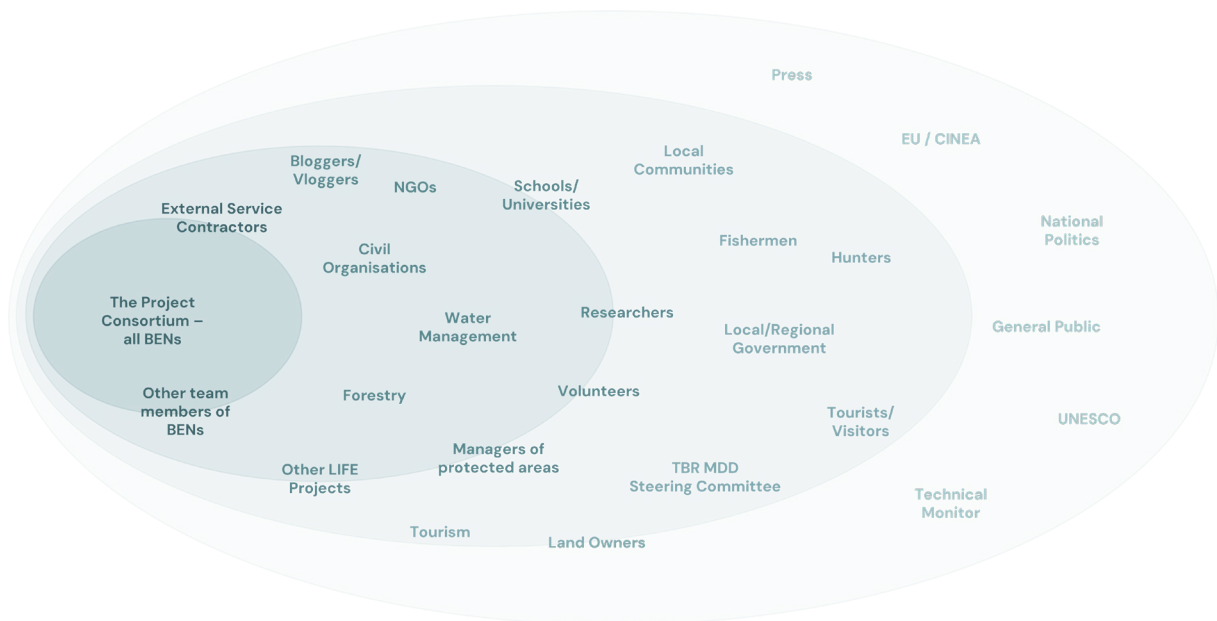


Figure 4: Stakeholder Environment of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project

Above the categorization into four circles, you can see the colour starting strong and dark on one side and growing lighter towards the outer circles. This represents the level of interaction and influence the PC has on the receptive stakeholder/target group.

The closer separation of the circles can be detailed into the following:

1. Core Project Team and Immediate Colleagues

This group comprises the PC and direct collaborators who are involved in day-to-day decision-making, project design, and implementation. Their engagement is characterized by active, two-way communication, continuous collaboration, and a high level of mutual influence.

This group is also the main target group for the [internal project webpage](#)¹⁶ and other internal communication activities.

2. Strategic Partners and Co-operators

This layer consists of organisations and individuals with whom the consortium has established formal partnerships or collaborative relationships around the core. These stakeholders contribute resources, knowledge and expertise that are essential to the progress of the project. Although they are less involved in day-to-day operations, their alignment with project goals requires regular, focused communication and joint planning efforts.

This level includes, but is not limited to, entities such as NGOs, civil society organisations and actors in forestry and water management. In addition, groups such as schools/universities, researchers, other LIFE projects, volunteers and protected area managers may fall under both category 2 and category 3.

To reach strategic partners and collaborators, both direct communication activities and broader activities such as the project newsletter, events and networking activities will be used.

3. Affected Groups and Potential Allies

The third circle includes a wider range of stakeholders, such as communities, organisations and individuals who are affected by the project's outcomes or who could support its objectives. Engagement with this group is strategic and focuses on understanding their needs, addressing their concerns and building their support.

This wider range includes local communities, fishermen, hunters, local and regional government, tourists and the TBR MDD Steering Committee (TBR MDD SC).

This category requires a mix of direct outreach and broader communication strategies such as events, supported by leaflets and factsheets, to build trust, foster collaboration and align interests.

4. General Information Recipients

The outermost layer consists of stakeholders who are not directly involved in the project, but who play a role in its wider ecosystem. This group requires regular updates and informed awareness of the project's progress, achievements and impacts. Communication with this segment should be clear, concise and objective, with the aim of maintaining transparency, generating public support and fulfilling accountability obligations.

The main audiences are the general press, the EU, national politicians, the general public, UNESCO and the Technical Monitor.

Communication activities will be covered by all the different activities planned in WP 7, as well as reporting obligations to target groups such as the EU and the Technical Monitor.

¹⁶ Internal project webpage [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/home?authuser=0>]

3.3. KEY MESSAGES

In order to effectively fulfil the objectives of the Global Project Objective F, which emphasises increasing awareness and knowledge of the importance of Natura 2000 sites, a comprehensive set of key messages has been developed.

These messages serve a dual purpose: not only do they communicate the activities and results of the project, but they also play a crucial role in educating both children and adults about the importance of protected areas, the challenges they face and the critical role of Natura 2000. Below, each key message is expanded upon to provide a more detailed understanding:

Understanding floodplain forests and river dynamics

The initial step is to educate the target groups about the complex workings of floodplain forests and river dynamics and create a common set of knowledge to further build on. Riverine floodplain forests are crucial ecosystems that rely on the ebb and flow of river water. These distinctive habitats require regular flooding events to replenish nutrients and water, which support a diverse range of plants and animals. The relationship between rivers and floodplain forests is mutually beneficial, with rivers shaping the landscape and ecosystems, and forests stabilising riverbanks and filtering water.

Threats to these unique habitats

It is important to highlight the ongoing threats facing these habitats, including climate change and the introduction of invasive alien species (IAS). Climate change poses a significant threat by altering rainfall patterns and increasing the frequency of extreme weather events, which can lead to excessive flooding or severe droughts, both of which can damage these ecosystems. The introduction of IAS can disrupt the natural balance by outcompeting native species for resources, leading to a loss of biodiversity.

The importance of protected areas, such as Natura 2000 sites

The following step is to demonstrate the importance of protecting these habitats. It is essential to preserve the unique and diverse nature of the ecosystems in these regions by safeguarding areas such as Natura 2000. Protected areas function as refuges for a wide range of species and play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance. Healthy ecosystems, such as forests and wetlands, are also crucial in the fight against climate change as they act as natural carbon sinks, absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere.

Nature restoration for future generations

Restoration is a crucial step in ensuring the longevity and resilience of natural habitats, following protection. This message emphasises the significance of returning ecosystems to their natural state. This includes planned activities such as removing invasive species and restoring natural water flows by widening river beds or connecting old arms. Restoration efforts can create more resilient habitats that are better able to withstand climate change and other environmental stresses, thereby ensuring the survival of diverse species.

Transboundary nature protection and cooperation

Nature's biodiversity and the challenges it faces are not limited by national borders. Therefore, the need for nature conservation is inherently linked to promoting cooperation beyond political boundaries. The concept of transboundary cooperation in environmental management, exemplified by the TBR MDD, demonstrates the significant potential for collective action in conservation. It represents a crucial milestone and a model for global conservation efforts, highlighting the importance of collaborative strategies to safeguard our common natural heritage.

Rivers connect nature and people

Rivers are important connections between nature and people, supporting biodiversity, human cultures, and economies. To emphasize the significance of river restoration, it is essential to demonstrate how healthy, free-flowing rivers benefit both ecosystems and human communities. They protect against the effects of global warming, such as floods, and enhance the quality of life and cultural heritage.

These six key messages are the main pillars of all communication activities within this project.

Each activity aims to support the communication, dissemination, and education of these main messages. The key messages will be adapted to the identified key audiences for different communication activities and levels of knowledge. Together, they provide a comprehensive understanding of the significance of Natura 2000 sites and the necessity for continuous conservation, education, and restoration efforts to guarantee the safeguarding and vitality of these crucial natural areas.

4. TOOLS OF COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

4.1. HARMONISED BRANDING

VISUAL IDENTITY

To increase the impact and efficiency of project communications, a distinctive **visual identity**¹⁷ is established from the start of the project. This identity includes specific fonts, colour codes and a unique design element. The **Bebas Neue** font is used for headlines and **DM Sans** for text (see **Figure 5**).

Headlines	BEBAS
Text	DM Sans
Example:	<p>1. HEADLINE 1</p> <p>1.1. HEADLINE 2</p> <p>1.1.1. HEADLINE 3</p> <p>Sub-headline</p> <p>Text: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor. Aenean massa. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Donec quam felis, ultricies nec, pellentesque eu, pretium quis, sem. Nulla consequat massa quis enim. Donec pede justo, fringilla vel, aliquet nec, vulputate eget, arcu. In enim justo, rhoncus ut, imperdiet a, venenatis vitae, justo.¹</p>

Figure 5: Chosen fonts of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD CI: Bebas Neue and DM Sans

The visual identity is further defined by a **palette of four colours** inspired by elements of the project area: "forest", "water", "earth" and "sand", as shown in **Figure 6**.





			
Forest	Water	Earth	Sand
R 156 G 190 B 138	R 125 G 170 B 175	R 150 G 125 B 106	R 252 G 239 B 221
C 42 M 11 Y 55 K 1	C 55 M 19 Y 30 K 3	C 34 M 42 Y 51 K 25	C 2 M 7 Y 16 K 0
Hex #a5be8a	Hex #7daaaf	Hex #967d6a	Hex #fcefd

Figure 6: Colour palette of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD CI

¹⁷ Corporate design landing page [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/important-information/communication/ci-templates?authuser=0>]

In addition, a specific **design element** (see [Figure 7](#)) has been chosen to accompany all communication activities. This element symbolises key factors of the project, including "the three rivers - Mura, Drava, Danube", "the floodplain forests" and "restoration". In particular, this design element, together with the "LIFE" and "Natura 2000" logos, should be used consistently in all communications relating to the project.

Project design element with project name



Single design element



Figure 7: LIFE RESTORE for MDD project design element

To ensure maximum flexibility and creative freedom inspired by nature, the design element can be changed to any of the four defined colours of the visual identity and can be used as a background as well as a focal point.

This visual identity is an integral part of both internal and external project communication, contributing to a broader public understanding. While the BENs, as organisations, have the flexibility to use their own visual identity, the usage of the project's visual identity is strongly encouraged. It should be prominently featured in presentations, websites, banners, flags, project materials, printed matter (such as leaflets, fact sheets, the Laymen's Report, etc.).

Detailed guidelines for the project's visual identity are in this chapter are available on the internal project webpage liferestore.eu¹⁸. Furthermore, all specific rules for communicational activities that have been defined in ANNEX 5 ARTICLE 16 & 17 of the [GA](#)¹⁹ are applicable throughout the project.

LOGO STRIPS

To highlight the involvement of all **17 partners** in the PC, a logo strip has been designed. There are two versions of this strip: One contains the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos, the other is without it (see [Figure 5](#)).

Whenever the design separates these two logos from the partner logos, the other logo strip should be used.



¹⁸ Internal project webpage [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/home?authuser=0>]

¹⁹ Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]



Figure 8: Logo strips of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD partner consortium (both versions)

A separate logo strip has been designed to highlight the **co-financiers** other than the European Union (see [Figure 6](#)).



Figure 9: Logo strip of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD Co-financiers

Whenever the space available for communication activities allows, both strips should be used. This includes materials such as roll-ups, presentations and websites. In comparison, neither strip is included on the beach flag, a pen or a social media post.

Again, a distinction must be made between a medium that is large enough to display the LIFE and Nature 2000 logo (e.g. beach flag) and a medium that does not display the logo at all (a pen, a social media post).

TEMPLATES

All presentations (PPT file) and documents (Word file) within the frame of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project will be produced in the [Corporate Design](#)²⁰ (CD) of the project. Additional templates such as [minutes](#)²¹ and/or a [participant list](#)²² will also be produced and shared within the PC.

²⁰ Corporate design landing page [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/important-information/communication/ci-templates?authuser=0>]

²¹ Minute template [https://docs.google.com/document/d/15eQUN1cnwjcXNkjs3M1Nj0R0RwZcHzWe/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=105640073056720385813&rtpof=true&sd=true]

²² Participant list template [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ddjxDtRD3x64gSBoVK6BqWQnXcRKbWtk/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=105640073056720385813&rtpof=true&sd=true]

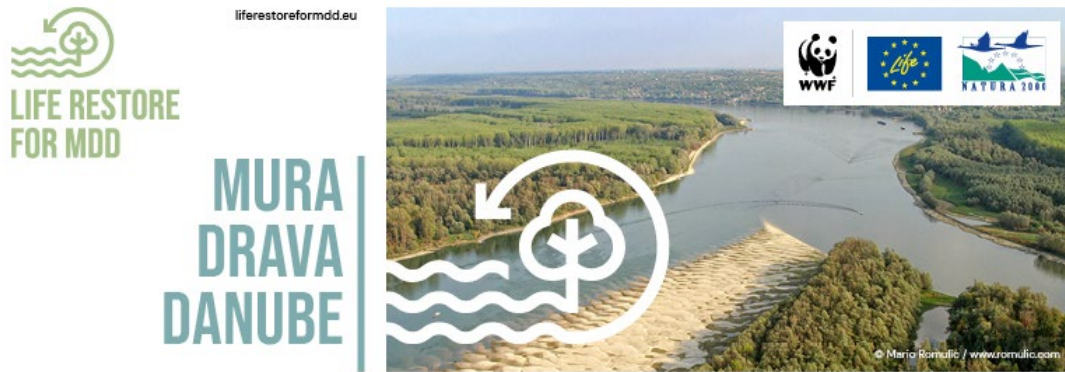


Figure 10: Example of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD E-Mail Signature

In addition, other templates have been created to incorporate the project CD wherever possible. These include templates such as the customisable [email signature](#)²³ (as shown in [Figure 7](#)) for each BEN, as well as a [digital background for online meetings](#)²⁴. This range of templates will be extended throughout the project as and when the need arises.

Whenever documents or presentations are shared within or outside the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project, these templates must be used.

COMMUNICATION PACKAGE

As part of the communication strategy, the COO BEN developed a communication package consisting of:

- The designated fonts: Bebas Neue and DM Sans;
- Four colour codes;
- The design element;
- Word templates;
- PPT template;
- Email signature template;

This communication package is shown on the internal project webpage under [CI & Templates](#)²⁵ or can be found on the project [Google Drive](#)²⁶.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

To support the presence of the LIFE RESTORE for MDD PC at events, a **beach flag** and **roll-ups** (as shown in [Figure 8](#)) have been designed. With the possibility of using different colours of the project CD, there are at least two options for each design to suit different preferences and situations. Each event organised by the PC or in which it participates must be accompanied by either a beach flag or a roll-up.

²³ Email signature [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IdWCUFeTcemMUbjORHom3rFhWfpYgRif/view?usp=drive_link]

²⁴ Online meeting background

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1T949utE4C1qrvsrj6ls8Ah25WxABlJaO/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=105640073056720385813&rtpof=true&sd=true]

²⁵ CI & Templates [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/important-information/communication/ci-templates?authuser=0>]

²⁶ LIFE RESTORE for MDD Google Drive [<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10BISs7hcy07tSEqHC27PUygmkv3I2eF>]



Figure 11: Roll-Ups in the project CI

In order to emphasise the joint appearance of all members of the PC, a set of **promotional materials** has been designed and produced by the COO BEN. This set includes the following branded item:

- a pen
- a notebook
- a folder
- a t-shirt (see [Figure 9](#))
- a canvas bag
- a magnetic pin (to use on unbranded clothing items like outdoor jackets)
- one flag of the project visual per team



Figure 12: Branded T-Shirts in the project CI

In relation to Chapter 1.6 **Sustainable Communication**, all products produced within the project must be organic or FSC certified where possible. Suppliers must produce as locally and sustainably as possible, and small suppliers are preferred to large ones.

4.2. DEFINED ACTIONS AND CHANNELS

The LIFE RESTORE for MDD Communication Work Package (WP7) was agreed between the partners during the proposal phase, and for each site and partner, dissemination and awareness activities were planned to achieve the greatest impact.

These activities can be grouped into six different channels, which are described in more detail below.

4.2.1. WEB PRESENCE AND DIGITAL EVIDENCE

PROJECT WEBSITE

The LIFE RESTORE for MDD project website will be set up as a sub-site of the 'amazon-of-europe.com' website and will have its own URL under 'liferestoreformdd.eu'. It was originally defined as a sub-site of the WWF-Austria website, which is entirely in German. Therefore, during the planning phase of the project, to ensure sustainability of the website even after project end, and larger reach from its start, it was decided that it would make more sense to connect the project website to the Amazon of Europe website.

This website will be set up by WWF-Austria during the first year of the project and will contain all relevant project information, a project map, a news section and a calendar of events. Furthermore, the website will function as the main platform to raise awareness about Natura 2000 and dynamic floodplains. After the initial set up the webpage will be continuously updated by the communication manager of WWF-Austria. In addition, each BEN will describe the project on its own website and link to the main project website. A common short description of the project is included in the [annex 7.1](#) to this communication strategy. This description can be used as it is or adapted to highlight the specific involvement and actions planned by each BEN.

[Sub-T.7.3.1]

SOCIAL MEDIA

In order to increase the outreach and engagement of LIFE RESTORE for MDD, a strategic focus will be placed on the use of online communication through **social media**. The Communication Manager (CM) will consistently disseminate updates on both WWF-Austria's and Amazon of Europe's existing social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube). All BENs will share updates on their own social media channels. In the interest of sustainability, it was decided not to create any new social media accounts. This approach underlines the commitment to maximising the impact of existing channels rather than diluting efforts across too many platforms.



Figure 13: Project kick-off Instagram posting example (Source: [WWF-AT Instagram Channel](#))

When BENs use their respective social media channels, the project CI cannot always be adhered to. In addition, the visual branding requirements of the funding body, the EU, are not applicable as the size of an image on Instagram is often too small to add logos (as shown in [Figure 10](#)).

However, in these cases it is necessary to mention the name of the project '**LIFE RESTORE for MDD**' in the caption of the post and to add a specific set of **hashtags** to ensure a visible link to the project.

This set of hashtags includes, but is not limited to:

#LIFERestoreforMDD #LIFEprogramme #LIFEproject #Natura2000 #MDD

Social media will be a valuable channel for additional activities, including a nature-themed photo competition, interactive quizzes, live Q&A sessions, streaming of selected events and targeted campaigns. These campaigns are designed to introduce and reinforce the core messages of LIFE RESTORE for MDD and will focus on topics such as Invasive Alien Species (IAS) eradication initiatives and strategies. Through these efforts, a deeper connection with the audience is aimed to be created, and active participation and awareness of environmental conservation are encouraged.

[Sub-T.7.3.2]

DIGITAL EVIDENCE

A series of **ten short videos** for social media and online streaming platforms such as YouTube will be produced by an external service provider. These short videos will cover the planned implementation tasks as well as focus on more general topics such as Natura 2000 and IAS. The focus of the videos will be determined by the CWG. These videos will be planned and produced by WWF-AT with the help of all BENs.

BENs will document and film short videos to be shared on the respective project channels. These videos, which will be of a popular nature science, aim to present project objectives and activities in a style that is understandable to the general public. The main project videos will be in English or a local language with subtitles.

A **long film** about the Mura-Drava-Danube floodplain will also be made to reach a wider audience and raise awareness of the need to protect this area. Filming will take place in project years one and two, with production in year three and widespread presentation in years four and five, with the aim of reaching a wide audience with a film that will remain relevant and informative after the project.

Good quality photographic material will be produced for each restoration site, the overall project area and the activities undertaken. The selection of photographic material will be made by the CM with each BEN for inclusion in continuously updated communication materials.

In summary, the actions defined in relation to online communication and visual material will mainly relate to SPO F.1, Dissemination, promotion and communication of project activities and results, and SPO F.3, Implementation of educational tasks, in relation to activities such as educational campaigns.

[Sub-T.7.3.3]

4.2.2. PRESS ACTIVITIES

The LIFE RESTORE for MDD team aims to communicate the project's activities, objectives and results of the project to the public through the press. Minimum targets will be set, but continuous communication and ongoing engagement with the press and public will be maintained throughout the project to ensure the successful achievement of SPO F.1.

At project level, at least two joint **press releases** will be issued - one at the beginning and one at the end of the project. These releases will be written in English by the lead CM and then translated and distributed by the national coordinators (NC) in their respective local languages. The designated national coordinators are IRSNC for Slovenia, GO for Croatia, DDNPI for Hungary and VSUME for Serbia. The first joint press release of the project, published in October 2023, is included in the annex to this communication strategy.

At national and local level, a minimum of five press releases will be issued throughout the project, specifically highlighting the restoration and conservation activities. Each press release will include a project map and visual material from the project area to enhance its dissemination value.

[Sub-T.7.4.1]

Given the high level of press interest in previous Mura-Drava-Danube projects, a minimum of ten press events related to the restoration activities will be organised, together with a minimum of 25 press releases, which are expected to generate 100 articles in various media.

Two project-level **press conferences** will be held in years three and five to communicate significant progress and final results, targeting Austrian and international media. In addition, at least five press conferences will be organised throughout the project area (one per country) to communicate results to regional and national media.

[Sub-T.7.4.2]

To effectively communicate the need for restoration, particularly in the context of climate change, and to attract international media coverage of the project area, a **press trip** format has been chosen. This approach, which has been successful in the DRAVA LIFE project, aims to produce one or two exclusive stories on the importance of restoration in protected areas and the results achieved within the Natura 2000 network using LIFE funds. WWF-AT will organise the press trip, with all BENs supporting the field visits and local guidance in their project areas.

[Sub-T.7.4.3]

4.2.3. PROJECT PUBLICATIONS

LIFE RESTORE for MDD is committed to minimising printed materials for efficient distribution while reducing environmental impact. Key printed materials include:

A **project leaflet** designed and written by WWF-AT in English, with translations into all five languages carried out by IRSNC, GO, WWF-HU and VSUME. The main purpose of the leaflet is to briefly summarise all information relevant to the project in one place, and it will be used and distributed on occasions such as press events or events with local stakeholders.

At the end of the project, a **layman's report** should be produced to summarise the project's work, results and long-term environmental benefits for a general audience. It should be written in plain English and translated into the five project languages, avoiding technical jargon.

Both the leaflet and the layman's report should be published in electronic form on the project website and in printed form with a print run of 10,000 copies.

Restoration Factsheets for each restoration site will be produced at the beginning of the project in the first two years and updated at the end of the project to reflect the state of implementation. The general template for these factsheets will be prepared by WWF-AT and later adapted by each BEN with specific content for each implementation site and planned activity. These factsheets will be used both digitally, linked on the project website and shared with communication activities such as press releases, and

printed for distribution at events such as local stakeholder events planned at each implementation site.

An **electronic project newsletter** will be distributed twice a year, every six months, to the partnership and interested stakeholders, providing information on project activities and achievements. It will be produced in English by the CM and distributed by e-mail. The first project newsletter will be shared in April 2024.

In addition, **smaller local publications** related to specific activities will be produced. For example, DDNPI (HU) and IRSNC (SI) will publish an annual stakeholder newsletter, while BEN's MP, JU ZDP VZ, JU KKZ will produce brochures on IAS eradication.

[T.7.6]

4.2.4. EVENT ORGANISATION

The LIFE RESTORE for MDD project will be prominently **featured in regional and international events**, such as the "Mura-Drava-Danube" or "Amazon of Europe" days, to celebrate the rivers and educate the public about their value and the need for restoration.

[Sub-T.7.5.2]

All restoration activities will be accompanied by **information events with local communities** and stakeholders. These events are crucial for local understanding and support, given the disruption caused by restoration activities. Each river, oxbow or side channel restoration site will have at least one event organised by the implementing partners to inform local people and communicate key messages.

To support these events, site **factsheets** are to be prepared which present the implementation and explain the project context. Each restoration site will be accompanied by a **LIFE information board** during the construction phase, which will include the LIFE visibility requirements and information about the project and the site. A general design template will be developed by WWF-AT and given to the implementing BENs for customisation.

Additional information exchange opportunities will be used by partners to share information about the project. These include:

- Two local open days to inform local people about the project (DDNPI)
- Four stakeholder workshops in Koprivnica-Krizevci County
- Five Steering Committee meetings at county level in Virovitica-Podravina TBR MDD (JU VP)
- Educational media campaign on invasive species (JU MP), including video communication
- Stakeholder events with local people (fishermen, weekend cottage owners and visitors, etc.) in Monoštorski rit
- Alignment meetings with companies interested in the local area (VSUME, external)

[T.7.8]

At the end of the project, in year five, a final event will be held in Slovenia, a conference to disseminate restoration results and showcase joint achievements. The event will be organised by IRSNC with contributions from all BENs.

The event will include a conference bag prepared by WWF-AT.

[Sub-T.7.5.1]

Each event hosted by a BEN must be accompanied by promotional items such as roll-ups and beach flags for visual identity and project recognition, as well as printed materials such as leaflets and fact sheets. If a BEN is unable to produce a roll-up or beach flag, visual material - such as posters - showing LIFE and Natura 2000 and the project title must be displayed.

A list of all the events planned throughout the project is included in the [annex 7.2](#) to this communication strategy.

All events can also be found in the [event calendar](#)²⁷ on the [internal project webpage](#)²⁸, which is updated regularly and includes not only project events, but also deadlines, workshops and public holidays, to facilitate alignment across the five countries.

4.2.5. NETWORKING AND AWARENESS RAISING

The project will be represented at various conferences and workshops, with lead BEN WWF-AT and other BENs presenting project activities and results. This includes participation in national LIFE platforms (at least 15 participations) and presentations at local, national, and international conferences.

There are four levels of networking:

1. Superordinate Programmes;
2. Other LIFE projects;
3. Academic events (posters);
4. Signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with other projects in the Danube basin.

According to the [GA](#)²⁹, the expected results of the project are

1. Presentation of the project at conferences and workshops - at least 10 events (ICPDR meetings and events, UNESCO EuroMAB conference, IUCN conference, EUSDR, Ramsar).
2. National LIFE Platforms in all 5 countries - min. 15 participants
3. Presentation of the project at local, national and international conferences - academic events (poster sessions)
4. Invitation of at least 3 other LIFE project teams to the restoration sites of the project
5. Study visits to successful river restoration projects
 - Elbe River Landscape Biosphere Reserve in Germany (June 2024)
 - River system Loire-Allier, France (2026)
 - Study visit to a third successful river restoration project (TBD) in 2028

For the presentation of the project at academic events, the COO BEN will provide a template for posters to be adapted by the BENs.

Networking and study trips by individual teams or as part of the training activities are also planned.

[Sub-T.7.7]

²⁷ Event Calendar [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/important-information/event-calendar?authuser=0>]

²⁸ Internal project webpage [<https://sites.google.com/wwf.panda.org/lr4mdd/home?authuser=0>]

²⁹ Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]

4.2.6. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The LIFE RESTORE for MDD project has a strong focus on educational activities, building on the framework and concepts of the Interreg DTP projects coopMDD and lifelineMDD. It focuses on educating children and young adults about dynamic rivers and their floodplains. In the first year, all BENs will be brought to the same level of knowledge of this framework under the guidance of GO. Three educational workshops by the EWG are planned over the project years.

In Austria, RMSO will organise national trainings for various professionals from the Lower Mura region, using the TtT concept from Lifeline MDD. RMSO will also develop activities including nature interpretation for the regional population.

[Sub-T.7.9.1]

In Slovenia, IRSNC will establish the network of biosphere schools of the Natura 2000 Mura site and organise science days to increase knowledge about natural processes in floodplain forests and promote Natura 2000.

[Sub-T.7.9.2]

In Croatia, JU KKZ and JU ZDP VZ will carry out educational activities focusing on youth. JU ZDP VZ will involve primary schools in the Rivers'Cool programme and JU VP will organise annual Young Ranger Camps with various activities. JU MP will develop a "Network of Schools of the Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve in the County of Međimurje", hold annual community meetings and produce a yearbook. JU KKZ will organise educational workshops for children in Koprivnica-Križevci County.

[Sub-T.7.9.4]

Finally, GO will develop "Floodplain Forest Camps" to teach children about nature, and hold one-day educational workshops in Aljmaški rit.

[Sub-T.7.9.5]

5. ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

5.1. EXPECTED IMPACTS

The expected impact of the communication actions of this project is a better understanding of the importance and functioning of floodplain forests and river dynamics, the importance of protected areas and Natura 2000, as well as an increased awareness of the TBR MDD among the general public. This includes quality education programmes for children and active cooperation with local stakeholders.

The following impacts are expected (see impact table below):

- Web presence and digital evidence: 439,940 reached persons;
- Press-related activities: 500,000 reached persons;
- Project public events: 19,000 visitors, 12,000 persons additionally reached;
- Project publications: 24,000 reached persons;
- Networking and awareness raising activities: 6,300 persons;
- Awareness raising activities with local communities: 40,000 persons reached, 500 visitors;
- Educational activities within the Mura-Drava-Danube area: 10,000 persons reached, 2,375 visitors;

In total, it is expected to reach around 1,000,000 people, either through a mix of events, excursions, networking events, publications or other awareness-raising and educational activities.

Five years after the end of the project, it is expected that the materials, particularly through the TtT approach and the educational materials, will have been integrated into regular teaching and activities, thus multiplying the audience reached. It is also expected that networking will continue and that the results of the project will continue to be disseminated by the BENs.

A more detailed overview of impacts are shown in [Table 1](#).

A short summary of activities and visions will be discussed in chapter 6 [Conclusion and Future Communication Actions](#).

Overview of Impacts: Dissemination and communication, education, and raising awareness				
Task N°	Activity	Beneficiary	Reach(Persons)	Participants (or Visitors)
T7.3	Web Presence and digital evidence		439,940	
T7.3.1	Website	WWF-AT	70,000	
	Presentation on partner website	all BENs	80	
T7.3.2	Social Media	WWF-AT	180,000	
	Partners' Social Media	all BENs	102,000	
	WWF-HU 2 Social Media packages	WWF-HU	3,000	
T7.3.3	Project visual materials			
	Youtube videos	WWF-AT	3,400	
	Live screening of videos at events and presentations	all BENs	540	
	Local Videos	WWF-HU, JU MP, GO	1,000	
T7.4	Press-related activities (press releases, interviews, articles, press trips, etc.)	all BENs	500,000	
T7.5	Project public events	WWF-AT	12,000	19,625
	International Mura Seminar*	IRSNC	200	100
T7.5.1	Final project event - Slovenia	IRSNC		100
T7.5.3	Local events in Austria: Mura-Drava-Danube Days	RMSO		125
T7.5.4	Local events in Slovenia	IRSNC		1,000
T7.5.5	Local events in Hungary			
	Mura-Drava-Danube Days Pécs	DDNPI	10,000	10,000
	Kerka-Mura Vízimuri	BfNPI	800	600
T7.5.6	Local events in Croatia			
	Big Jump	JU VP	1,000	5,000
	Mura-Drava-Danube (Amazon of Europe) Days Osijek	GO		1,200
T7.5.7	Local events in Serbia: Bodrog Festival*	VSUME		1,500
T7.6	Project publications		24,400	
	LIFE RESTORE FOR MDD leaflet		20,000	
	Laymen's Brochure		3,400	
	Project Newsletter		1,000	
T7.7	Networking an awareness raising		6,335	25
	Loire-Allier Field Trip*		60	25
	LIFE field trips		25	
	Participations and presentation at different events (LIFE Platforms, international conferences)		6,250	
T7.8	Awareness raising for protected areas, LIFE and project activities within local communities		40,000	510
	Community events and other local activities	STMK, RMSO		45
	Awareness raising/stakeholder events for Slovenian restoration sites ("community evenings")	RSNC, SiDG, SWA		80
	Awareness raising for 3 oxbows on Mura	BfNPD		45

	Awareness raising/stakeholder events for restoration sites on Drava and Danube (at two visitor centres Old drava Szaporca and Stork Museum, Kólked)	DDNPI		200
	Awareness raising in Medjimurje county – 2 campaigns – 20,000 persons per	JU MP	40,000	
	Awareness raising in Virovitica–Podravina county – TBR MDD VP County Steering Committee	JU VP		100
	Awareness raising for Monostorski rit restoration site SHs	VSUME		40
T7.9	Educational activities within the Mura–Drava–Danube area****		10,600	2,375
	Train the Trainers Seminars*	RMSO	300	30
	Train the Trainer Seminar – Mura*	IRSNC	200	20
	Train the Trainer seminars Hungary	WWF–HU		60
	E-learning course	WWF–HU		70
	Network of Biosphere Schools in the Natura 2000 Site Mura	IRSNC		225
	River'sCool Varazdin (9–10 schools)	JU ZDP VZ		720
	Young Rangers Camp**,***	JU VP	10,100	170
	Education activities in Koprivnica–Križevci County (8 educ. workshops)	JU KKZ		160
	MDD Floodplain Forest Camps	GO		120
	One–day workshop Aljmaski rit	GO		800
			Reach(persons)	Participants (or visitors)
			1,033,275	22,535
		TOTAL REACH	1,055,810	
* Education or SH event activity targeting "multipliers" (such as teachers), therefore reach calculated additionally to participants (estimations)				
**Education or SH event activity partially targeting "multipliers" (such as teachers), therefore reach calculated additionally to participants (estimations)				
*** Additional reach calculated due to media and social media activities (no double–count)				
**** The total number of participants of T 7.9 equals the number of people participating in trainings				

Table 1: Communication Impact Table (Source: GA)

5.2. DELIVERABLES

As part of the [GA](#)³⁰, eight deliverables were defined in relation to the dissemination and communication, education and awareness activities of the project. A list of these deliverables is given below (see [Table 2](#)).

While the lead BEN for all of these deliverables is WWF-AT, all BENs are expected to support the lead BEN whenever possible and appropriate.

Number	Name	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Due Date (in months)
D49	Communication Strategy	WWF-AT	R – Document, Report	4

³⁰ Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]

D50	Communication Package	WWF-AT	DATA	7
D51	Project website	WWF-AT	DATA	12
D52	Project films	WWF-AT	OTHER	12
D53	Press releases	WWF-AT	OTHER	60
D54	Project Leaflet in 6 languages	WWF-AT	R	7
D55	Laymen's Report	WWF-AT	R	60
D56	Restoration Factsheets	WWF-AT	R	60

Table 2: Deliverables for WP7 (Source: [GA](#))

5.3. MILESTONES

Out of 38 milestones, defined in the GA, three milestones are connected to the communicational activities. These are shown in [Table 3](#).

Milestone No	Milestone Name	Lead Beneficiary	Means of Verification	Due Date (month)
31	Common set of key messages defined	WWF-AT	Minutes of CEWG; aligned set of main messages integrated on website, in Communication Package and key communication materials	7
32	Communication and Education Working Group (CEWG) established	WWF-AT	List of confirmed CEWG members after first online meeting	4
33	Promotion material	WWF-AT	First promotion material by all partners produced (Beach flag, roll-up)	10

Table 3: Milestones for WP7 (Source: [GA](#))

5.4. IMPACT MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

5.4.1. IMPACT MONITORING TOOLS

In order to effectively achieve the desired results of the dissemination, communication, education and awareness activities within the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project, a comprehensive evaluation framework has been implemented. This framework includes evaluations by all BENs, NCs and a final evaluation by the COO BEN.

The structure and criteria for these evaluations are derived from the [GA](#)³¹, focusing specifically on the projected impacts, deliverables and milestones outlined in WP7.

³¹ Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]

The monitoring of communication activities within the project is approached in a number of ways.

The lead CM has distributed a **monitoring template** to all communication officers in the PC. This template, to be **completed quarterly and as part of every reporting by every BEN**, is to be submitted to the COO BEN.

The monitoring template is divided into three parts: Communication activities, dissemination activities and press monitoring.

The communication activity monitoring covers the following details and information:

- Date of action
- Related task number
- Communication Activity Name
- Description
- Target audience
- Communication channel
- Outcome / Reach
- Status

While the dissemination activity monitoring collects information about:

- Date of action
- Related task number
- Activity Name
- Type of dissemination activity
- Target audience reached
- Reach (in numbers)
- Participants/Visitors (for events only)
- Description of objective(s) with reference to a specific project output
- Status (cancelled, delivered, postponed or ongoing)

The press monitoring collects all information of press clippings and social media posts or radio mentions about the project made by other parties. To properly monitor the impact it covers the following information:

- Date of posting/radio show etc.
- Related Task (if possible)
- Medium
- Account (for social media only)
- Communication channel
- Headline
- Reach (in numbers, if possible)
- Reactions (for social media posts)
- Link (if possible)

Apart from that, NCs are required to complete the press monitoring **one month after significant press releases** to ensure timely reporting of all measurable activity and impact of the press release.

In addition, all BENs must document their communication activities by filling in and keeping **event attendance sheets** (list of participants) whenever possible, and by documenting workshops and events with **photographic material**. For those under 18, a responsible adult, such as a parent or teacher, is sufficient. It is essential that a legal statement is included on all attendance sheets, giving the project team the right to take and distribute images of participants.

For documentation purposes, all communication activities including press releases and social media posts (both owned and earned) should be **saved as screenshots or PDFs** and shared with the COO BEN along with the monitoring template on a quarterly basis.

All information should be compiled into one PDF and **each clipping must be tagged with its unique reference** that matches the activity reference in the impact monitoring template.

5.4.2. IMPACT MONITORING INDICATORS

KPIs are essential project management tools for a number of reasons.

- Firstly, they provide a **measurable** way of tracking progress towards project objectives, enabling project managers to assess whether the project is on track or whether adjustments need to be made.
- Secondly, KPIs facilitate **performance evaluation** by assessing various project components such as budget management, schedule adherence, quality of deliverables and stakeholder satisfaction. This evaluation helps to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, contributing to more effective decision making.
- In addition, KPIs promote **accountability and transparency** by defining clear expectations and responsibilities for project team members and stakeholders.

They also facilitate effective communication and reporting by providing concise, relevant and measurable data that can be shared with stakeholders, sponsors and other interested parties. Overall, KPIs support a culture of continuous improvement by highlighting areas for improvement and innovation, driving performance improvements over time and ultimately contributing to project success.

The LIFE KPI database collects the aggregated impact of projects on a set of pre-defined indicators included in Annex II of the LIFE Regulation and the **GA**³².

In addition, the LIFE Programme requires the following mandatory KPIs related to communication

- People affected by the project;
- Website;
- Networking and synergies with other projects/initiatives.

³² Grant Agreement [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CZ4QoPAjF3YdKnJVdA4WwyCcJyD0g4_-/view?usp=drive_link]

6. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

Although all communication activities defined in the GA are limited to the five-year timeframe of the project, LIFE RESTORE for MDD places a strong emphasis on the implementation of sustainable communication activities and formats for the TBR MDD.

It is important to understand the communication structure established within the TBR MDD in order to support and strengthen the existing network. All activities should be planned and organised with long-term communication plans and a strategy for the future of the TBR MDD.

However, the PC plans to build on these existing structures and improve them where possible and necessary. An example of an existing format is the Mura-Drava-Danube Days, which were established before the project and will continue after its end. Another example is the establishment of a project website; the PC will also adapt and renew the existing Amazon of Europe website and set up a new content management system that will continue beyond the five-year project timeframe.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder engagement is crucial for the sustainable development of the area. The various tasks involving stakeholder engagement in the LIFE RESTORE for MDD project will be planned and implemented in the project with a long-term perspective. Actions established during the project period will be continued after the end of the project. The communication and education activities provide a valuable basis for this.

CORPORATE IDENTITY

The CI developed during the project will be freely available to all BENs. After the project, the CI should be used as the CI of the TBR MDD. Future projects in the area may also be able to use the CI for their project products.

WEBSITE

The former Amazon of Europe website will continue to be the main platform for the TBR MDD, combining information and links for all five countries. The content management structure should be clearly defined.

LAYMAN'S REPORT

A layman's report will be produced at the end of the project. This will highlight the achievements of the project and the challenges ahead for further restoration within the TBR MDD.

AFTER-LIFE PLAN

As stated on the official CINEA page, the After-LIFE Plan is a mandatory document that focuses on the future beyond LIFE RESTORE for the life of the MDD. LIFE projects funded from 2014 onwards (including preparatory, integrated, capacity building and climate action projects, but excluding technical assistance projects) must produce an After-LIFE Plan as a separate chapter of the final report.

The After-LIFE Plan should describe how dissemination and communication of results will continue after the end of the project. It should include details of what actions will be carried out, when, by whom and with what sources of funding.

The After-LIFE Plan will

- Provide an overview of the project and an assessment of the situation at the end of the project;
- Define the After-LIFE objectives and methodology;
- Identify funding needs and sources;
- Meet the contractual requirements of this task.

This communication strategy serves as a vital tool for building relationships, fostering collaboration, promoting transparency, facilitating learning and advocating for support - all of which are essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of a project.

In essence, a well-executed communication strategy extends the life and impact of a project beyond its active phase by preserving knowledge, maintaining stakeholder engagement, facilitating evaluation and reflection, building legacy, mobilising resources and empowering communities for sustainable change and development.

7. ANNEX I

7.1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

"LIFE RESTORE for MDD - Preserving and restoring floodplain forest habitats along the Mura-Drava Danube" focuses on the conservation and restoration of the largest contiguous floodplain forest system in the Danube River Basin. For five years, 17 partners from Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia and Serbia will work together to combat the degradation of the priority floodplain forest habitat type HT 91E0* and HT 91F0 by restoring and improving 2,472 ha of floodplains, 45,230 m of water bodies and mobilising 966,000 m³ of sediments through river dynamics.

The project area is a 2,071.6 km² river corridor connecting 17 Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas in the UNESCO Five-country Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube. The sites form a continuous string along 700 km of the three rivers.

River regulation, unsustainable water management, the spread of invasive alien species, loss of diversity, depletion of gene pools and weakly harmonised transboundary restoration planning are negatively affecting the status of these habitats.

These threats will be addressed by the multi-sectoral PC of water managers, nature conservationists, foresters, protected area managers, regional managers and NGOs in an integrated and transboundary restoration effort at 29 sites along the three rivers.

At four sites, river morphology will be restored for natural forest regeneration. At 14 sites, side channels will be connected to the river and oxbows restored to improve floodplain forest conditions. Natural forests will be maintained, improved or afforested at eleven sites.

Integrative transboundary river restoration planning on three pilot river stretches will ensure sustainable outcomes.

Communication, awareness raising, education and monitoring will accompany the restoration efforts.

7.2. PROJECT EVENT CALENDAR

Year	Planned date	BEN	Event description
2024-2028; annually	2nd February	JU VP	Winter Wetlands Bike Tour
2024	16th March	IRSNC	Natural Science Day
2024	20th April	DDNPD	Mura-Drava-Danube Day in Pécs
2024	23rd April	IRSNC	Natural Science Day
2024-2028; annually	Around 22nd May	JU MP	Yearly meeting with the Network of Schools of the Mura Drava Danube Biosphere Reserve in Međimurje County

2024	22nd May	IRSNC	Mura Festival
2024-2028; annually	2nd Sunday in July	JU VP	Big Jump
2024-2028; annually	July-August	JU VP	Young Rangers Camp
2024-2028; annually	23rd September	JU VP	Drava Day
2024-2028; annually	September	FAZOS	Symposium with international participation "Kopački rit past, present, future"
2024	Autumn	SiDG	Forestry Event
2024	Autumn	IRSNC	Natural Science Day
2024-2028; annually	December	JU VP	SCOM TBR MDD on county level
2025-2028; annually	August	BfNPD	TBR MDD days (4 events)
2024	December	JU VP	SCOM TBR MDD all 5 countries
2025	March	FAZOS	Celebrating International Day of Forests
2025	April	BfNPD	Stakeholder Forum I.
2025	Spring	GO	TBR MDD Festival in Zlatna Greda
2025	Autumn	GO	Community Evening at Aljmaški rit restoration site
2025	October	STMK	Community event on the restoration site Mühlbach
2025	October	BfNPD	RRWG Field Trip to Mura
2026	April	STMK	Community event on the restoration site Sulzbach
2026	April	STMK	Community event on the restoration site Drauchenbach
2026	April	BfNPD	Stakeholder Forum II.
2026	May	FAZOS	Celebrating Natura 2000 Day

2026	May – October	VSUME	Stakeholder events with local people (fishermen, weekend cottage owners and visitors, etc.) in Monoštorski rit including the Alignment meetings with companies interested in the local area
2026	Spring	GO	Floodplain forest camp in Zlatna Greda
2026	Autumn	GO	Community Evening at Aljmaški rit restoration site
2026, 2027	August	VSUME	Bodrog fest
2026	September	FAZOS	Celebrating International Drava River Day
2027	Spring	GO	Floodplain forest camp in Zlatna Greda
2027	Autumn	GO	Community Evening at Aljmaški rit restoration site
2028	Spring	GO	Community Evening at Aljmaški rit restoration site
2028	October	WWF-AT / IRSNC	LIFE RESTORE for MDD Closing Event

7.3. PROJECT KICK-OFF PRESS RELEASE



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