



AGROECOLOGY PARTNERSHIP



DELIVERABLE 3.1

DEC strategy and plan

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

© AGROECOLOGY Partnership, 2024



Co-funded by
the European Union

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Technical References

Deliverable No.	D3.1
Dissemination level ¹	PU - Public
Work package	WP3 - Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication (DEC)
Lead beneficiary	16 - AU
Version	1.0
Due date of deliverable	June 2024
Actual submission date	June 2024

Versions

Version	Person	Partner	Date
1.0	Jesper Emborg Anton Brander Lichtenberg	16 - AU	27.06.2024

Approved by the Coordinator on: 28.06.2024

Disclaimer. Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Executive summary	4
1.1	A dynamic and flexible DEC strategy and plan	4
1.2	Reaching the target audience	4
1.3	Local adaptation.....	4
1.4	Evaluation, monitoring and ongoing improvements	5
2	Purpose and scope of dissemination, exploitation, and communication	5
3	Target groups and stakeholders.....	6
3.1	Guidelines for communication to/with targets groups and stakeholders	7
4	Communication channels	8
4.1	Website	8
4.2	Social media channels.....	9
4.3	Newsletter and bulletin	9
4.4	MS Teams SharePoint.....	10
5	Agroecology logo description	10
6	Dissemination, exploitation, and communication (DEC) goals.....	11
6.1	DEC objectives.....	11
6.2	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	11
7	Communication principles	12
7.1	Dynamic DEC strategy.....	12
7.2	Decentralized communication responsibility.....	12
7.3	Collective effort.....	13
7.4	WP3 is available for sparring and assistance	13
7.5	Close DEC-cooperation with research projects	13
7.6	Acknowledgement of the EU co-funding.....	13
8	The DEC plan	14
9	Monitoring and evaluation of DEC activities.....	16
9.1	Evaluation of DEC activities across the Partnership	16
9.2	Continuous monitoring and evaluation of DEC activities followed by immediate changes when necessary	16
9.3	Monitoring of the Partnerships central communication channels.....	16

1 Executive summary

AGROECOLOGY, the European Partnership ‘Accelerating Farming Systems Transition: Agroecology Living Labs and Research Infrastructures’, is an ambitious, large-scale research and innovation initiative across Europe, involving collaboration between the European Commission, 26 Member States, Associated Countries and Third Countries.

The AGROECOLOGY Partnership is designed to bolster an agricultural sector capable of addressing the challenges presented by climate change, biodiversity loss, food security and sovereignty, as well as environmental concerns, all while maintaining profitability for farmers. A substantial transformation is imperative to render the agricultural sector more sustainable, resilient, and responsive to societal and policy demands.

Effective dissemination, exploitation and communication have been recognized as pivotal activities within the AGROECOLOGY Partnership to ensure the successful realization of its expected impact.

This deliverable is part of the WP3 (Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication, DEC), which aims to develop and implement an integrated strategy and plan for comprehensive dissemination and communication activities that will give visibility to the efforts of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership and maximise the impact of key exploitable results.

1.1 A dynamic and flexible DEC strategy and plan

This document describes a dynamic strategy and plan prepared for potential obstacles with a built-in flexibility to overcome them. The strategy and plan will be ready to use, and over time we anticipate some level of societal change as well as changes within the Partnership itself. The strategy and plan will be adapted as the context evolves over the entire duration of the project period.

1.2 Reaching the target audience

The DEC strategy identifies fundamental elements such as the target audiences and relevant stakeholders. It also describes the tools and channels activated to deliver the key messages as well as the expected timing of the planned activities.

1.3 Local adaptation

The strategy and plan will describe a variety of activities to be implemented on both an overall level and on a more local level with respect to regional dissemination and communication practices. The regional DEC activities will be in line with the overall activities of the Partnership whilst at the same time considering regional and local contexts and best practices.

Effective communication tools and communication channels relevant to the Partnership already exist in individual regions. The Partnership intends to include and exploit the individual partners' know-how to ensure that the relevant activities will be set in motion by those nearest the target audience, because it will ensure the Partnership's ability to reach local communities and target audiences as well as specific stakeholders in the most effective manner.

1.4 Evaluation, monitoring and ongoing improvements

The DEC strategy and plan will be ready for immediate implementation and will be revised continuously for the duration of the project. Positive experiences and proven results will substitute lesser successful activities or be added to existing ones to update and improve the outcome of the joint efforts. Some parts will evolve with the contribution of the partners and the stakeholders and other parts will be changed for the better due to further research and further examination.

The success of the implementation of the DEC strategy and plan will depend on the close collaboration and contributions of all consortium partners.

2 Purpose and scope of dissemination, exploitation, and communication

The main objective of this DEC strategy and plan is: 1) to maximize the visibility of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership, 2) to widely disseminate results at local, national and international level, 3) to maximize impacts in terms of awareness, engagement, and acceptance as a necessary precondition to boost its potential for exploitation and valorisation. The three main objectives of the DEC strategy will contribute to the overall uptake and acceleration of a transition to agroecology in Europe.

The AGROECOLOGY Partnership is a large-scale consortium with participation from 26 Member States (MS), Associated Countries (AC) and Third Countries. The transnational identity of the Partnership will require a strong and easily recognisable visual identity, to ensure recognition and impact across geographical as well as cultural borders. Logo, corporate design, and graphic identity is presented in this strategic document.

The DEC activities of the Partnership will require easily understandable and usable materials for the purpose of disseminating information on all relevant activities and outputs of the Partnership. These materials should be suitable for both central communication channels and easily adaptable to any local communication channels that the partners may choose to activate for dissemination, exploitation and communication purposes.

A great variety of both internal and external circumstances may impact the Partnership. As the AGROECOLOGY Partnership will be running for many years the DEC strategy and plan is dynamic, both in terms of the course and development the Partnerships take, but also in relation to the general

societal development. Close follow up and continuous evaluation will result in ongoing upgrades and improvements of the DEC strategy and plan.

This DEC strategy and plan is the first of a total of three deliverables throughout the Partnership:

- D3.1 in M6
- D3.5 in M44
- D3.6 in M82

Many of the stakeholders and target audiences identified in this strategy and plan are generally well informed about the challenges the Partnership aims to address. However, different needs require individual solutions. The DEC strategy and plan must be designed with great respect for the diverse level of knowledge, insights and experiences that the individual groups have with large scale programmes and projects that precedes the AGROECOLOGY Partnership. Also, some of the stakeholders and actors can be encouraged by partners to disseminate project outcomes.

3 Target groups and stakeholders

Every project has relevant target groups and stakeholders with individual communication needs. Information should be made accessible in a unique tone of voice, delivered on the appropriate communication channel(s) at the right time. Only when information is properly presented to the target audience and stakeholders, we will succeed with our DEC-efforts and reach the relevant people with the necessary influence to implement change.

Target group: In context of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership, a target group is defined as a group that is targeted by the Partnership and will be affected from its results.

Stakeholders: Individuals and/or groups of people, companies, organisations, or institutions that may experience significant positive or negative impact by the implementation of results derived from the Partnership.

Even though target groups and stakeholders are not necessarily identical, there is an overlap in the AGROECOLOGY Partnership. Both categories are key for activities related to dissemination, exploitation and communication, knowledge exchange and valorisation. They all have an interest in or an active role to play in the Partnership.

Both target groups and stakeholders are identified together in the illustration below:



Figure 1: Overview on target groups and stakeholders.

3.1 Guidelines for communication to/with target groups and stakeholders

- Any message must consist of clear and simple language which is easily understood by the respective target group/stakeholders. Consider for instance specialised versus non-specialised language.
- Messaging should be tailored for the audience, considering their interests and existing knowledge of a project and/or a specific topic.
- The distribution of any message shall go through the most appropriate channel to the specific audience.
- When communicating via social media, the content shall be as engaging for the audience as possible.

- Consider what the optimal time is for the relevant audience to receive and take in a specific message.
- Information sharing should be accurate and consistent, and coordinated across the relevant work packages to increase reach and impact.

4 Communication channels

4.1 Website

The website 'www.agroecologyPartnership.eu', launched in June 2024 (M6), will act as the primary communication channel of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership. It is designed to provide general information on the overall vision, objectives, activities and partners involved in the Partnership.

The website will consist of a calendar with past and upcoming events and a long-term storage facility for publicly available consultation and dissemination material, such as the SRIA, flyers, reports, presentations, policy briefs, etc.. Furthermore, it will contain information about calls and funded research projects. Each funded research project will have an individual webpage showcasing project objectives and results and dissemination material e.g. articles, videos, etc.. In addition, the website will integrate links to various platforms (e.g. AGROECOLOGY Collaborative Knowledge Platform of the Network), tools (e.g. monitoring) and websites of related EU initiatives (e.g. GEH).

The website will be continuously updated throughout the Partnership runtime. A clean and modern look will provide an attractive way to inform the Partnerships' stakeholders on activities and outputs. Stakeholders will be able to reach us through the website's contact form, which is immediately linked to the e-mail address (agroecology.ps@ilvo.vlaanderen.be) of the Partnership communication team. A screenshot of the website homepage is presented in Figure 2.

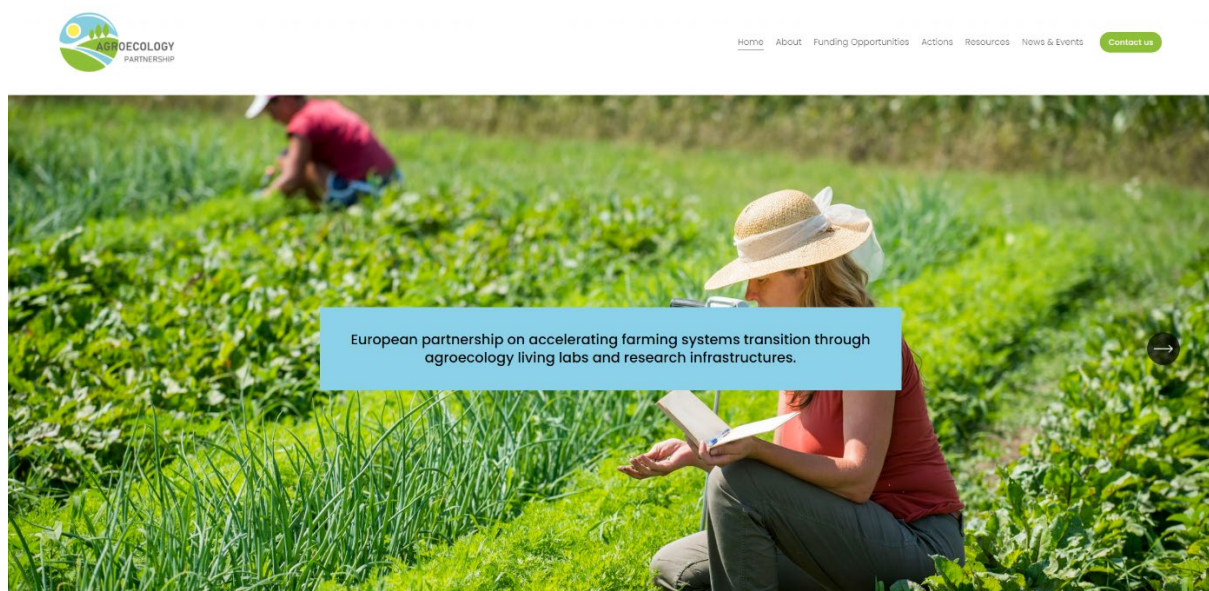


Figure 2: Homepage of the AGROECOLOGY website.

4.2 Social media channels

The AGROECOLOGY Partnership social media accounts on X (https://x.com/AGROECOLOGY_PS) and LinkedIn (<https://linkedin.com/company/agroecology-Partnership>) were set up in April 2024 (M4). Both platforms offer different but complementary features to support our DEC strategy and the network. X allows to communicate messages with a very limited number of characters on a quick and frequent basis to a broad audience that can easily reshare the content at a similar rate. LinkedIn is designed for building and establishing a network of professionals in the field. The information shared via LinkedIn can be more detailed and will connect the Partnership with people and groups with similar interests. Besides X and LinkedIn, the Partnership has also established a YouTube account ([AGROECOLOGY Partnership - YouTube](#)) that will be used for disseminating different types of videos e.g. webinars and promo videos of funded research projects.

As the Partnership implements a dynamic strategy that will continuously update and improve, other social media channels might be added in the future, if relevant.

A screenshot of the X and LinkedIn accounts are presented in Figure 3.

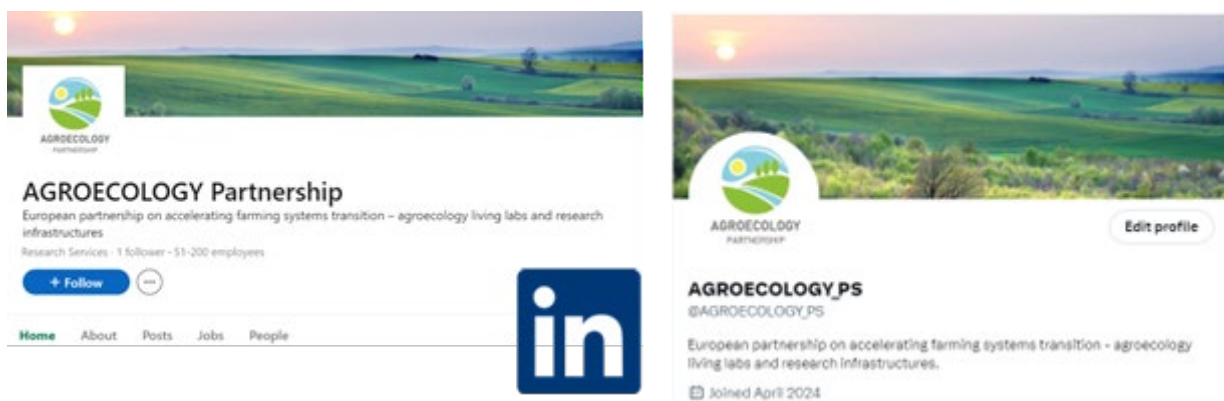


Figure 3: AGROECOLOGY Partnership X (right) and LinkedIn (left) accounts

4.3 Newsletter and bulletin

The Partnership has decided to implement a biannual newsletter. Everyone interested in the activities and output of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership can subscribe to the newsletter via the Partnership website. The newsletter will be targeted to relevant, external stakeholders, communicating overall Partnership progress and activities as well as activities and results of the research projects and living labs and research infrastructures.

An internal AGROECOLOGY Bulletin for the Partnership Assembly will be sent out monthly. All content will be collected via a shared excel sheet that will be made available in the MS Teams SharePoint general folder. It is the responsibility of all partners to provide relevant content regarding their current activities to the excel in a timely manner.

4.4 MS Teams SharePoint

An MS Teams SharePoint environment 'AGROECOLOGY_Partnership' has been set up in April 2024 (M4) under an ILVO account. Within this environment, the Executive Team and all Work Packages will have their own private channels, except for the general folder, which will include the Partnership Assembly contact details, official corporate design (e.g. logo, colour scheme), picture library, final Deliverables etc. Work Package leads are responsible for collecting all e-mail addresses of members who should be able to work within their private Work Package channel using the 'application for registration' form. Upon receipt of this information, ILVO will enable guest access and permissions to the corresponding channels for each Partnership member. The MS Teams SharePoint will act as internal workspace and primary platform for internal targeted communication.

5 Agroecology logo description

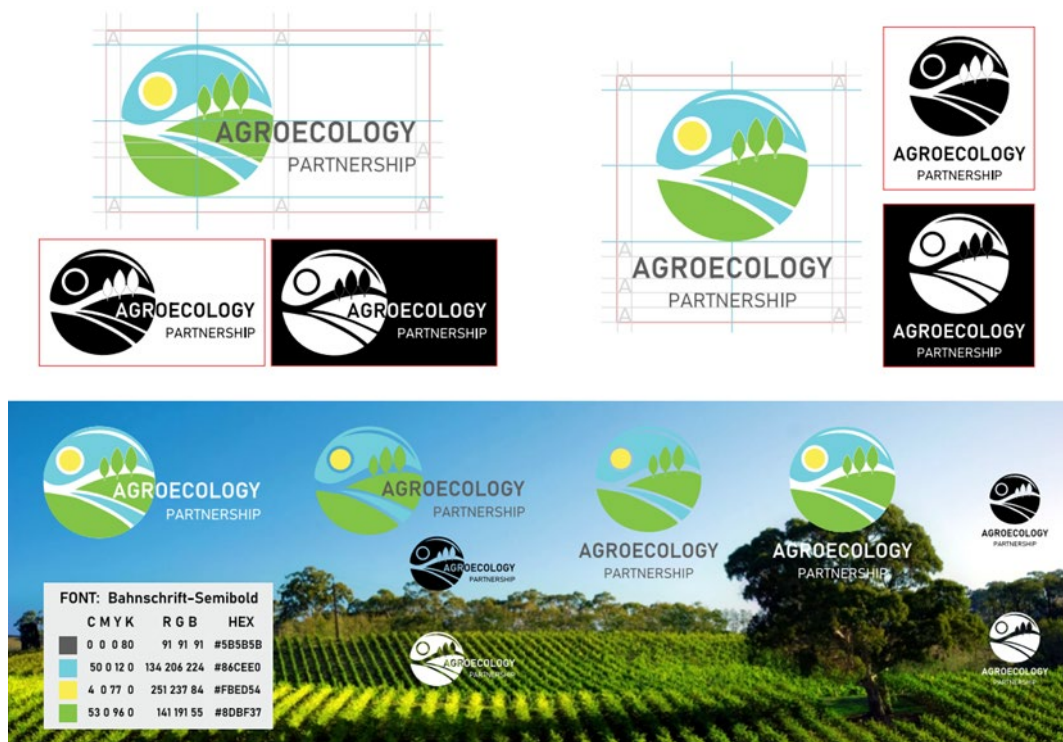


Figure 4: logo of AGROECOLOGY.

The logo construction was based on a first briefing among the WP3 partners where the most relevant guideline was: "Let's keep it simple, with trees, fields, sun and water".

With this guideline in mind, the logo illustrates a landscape with green fields and trees, yellow sun and blue water. These can be either outlined by white or transparent lines, which also represent the clouds and climate transition.

The logo also includes the wording “AGROECOLOGY PARTNERSHIP”, to distinguish the Partnership from the logos of many other existing entities that use the word AGROECOLOGY.

The logo can be used in the landscape or portrait format, colour or black and white and full or transparent.

The final logo was validated by all the WPs starting with first 3 (and later 4) different proposals, later changed according to suggestions received and another round of voting.

6 Dissemination, exploitation, and communication (DEC) goals

To make the DEC goals concrete, they are formulated as the objectives and key performance indicators listed below.

6.1 DEC objectives

- Establish a strong and recognisable visual identity for the Partnership.
- Inform, promote and communicate activities and results of the Partnership on appropriate communication channels (see below) in a tone of voice suitable to the target groups and stakeholders of the Partnership.
- Ensure that knowledge and results are freely available to the broader society.
- Design a system that allows concrete use of exploitable results of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership that is available to stakeholders and sectors of interest.
- Organise and promote meetings, seminars and workshops to showcase the results and impacts of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership.
- Identify key performance indicators to effectively monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the DEC activities.
- Establish a system that ensures coordination and alignment of external DEC activities as well as internal communication of the Partnership.

6.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

To optimise the Partnerships’ use of external communication channels, key performance indicators have been established for the central communication channels of the Partnership.

The following table shows KPIs for the first evaluation period, which covers year 1, meaning M1 – M12:

Communication channels	KPIs (M1 – M12)
Website	1000 sessions (Google analytics)
LinkedIn	100 followers 12 posts 300 impressions per post on average
X / Twitter	100 followers 12 posts 100 impressions per post on average
Newsletter	2 newsletters (3-5 news pieces per newsletter)
Bulletin	2 bulletins

The communication team will establish new KPIs once per year based on the evaluation of the performance of the previous year. The first evaluation will take place in M13 (January 2025).

7 Communication principles

This DEC strategy states overall communication principles. They illustrate how the Partnership ensures to adapt its communication efforts on an ongoing basis, how the responsibility for achieving the goals is distributed among the partners, and how each partner communicates as a partner of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership.

7.1 Dynamic DEC strategy

The establishment of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership is a dynamic condition, where the Partnership will accommodate the communication needs in a contemporary way.

The organization within the Partnership and the surrounding factors will evolve as the Partnership establishes itself. New opportunities for each partner and new expectations from stakeholders will arise. Changes in expectations, needs and demands are anticipated, so the DEC strategy is considered as a living and dynamic tool, which is continuously taken up for revision.

7.2 Decentralized communication responsibility

To live up to the responsibility of the Partnership's shared communication efforts, each partner must appoint a designated Partnership Communication Responsible (ParCom) with access to local communication channels, such as newsletters, social media, print media, etc.

By engaging all partners and adding a decentralized approach to the DEC activities, the Partnership strives to achieve maximum outreach. By activating the individual partners on a local level, the Partnership ensures that the respective target groups and stakeholders receive relevant content from an already trusted and locally known organisation in an appropriate language and tone of voice.

7.3 Collective effort

In addition to the central communication efforts of the WP3 communication team, all partners are responsible for the AGROECOLOGY Partnership to reach its communication goals.

All partners must contribute to achieving the agreed KPIs. To exploit the full reach of the entire Partnership, each partner is committed to suggest concrete activities that support the Partnerships' KPIs. The AGROECOLOGY Partnership breaks down the overall strategic DEC goals to concrete activities in the action plan (DEC plan). During the ongoing planning and execution of DEC-activities, the decentralized communication responsibility means each partner plays a key role.

7.4 WP3 is available for sparring and assistance

The communication team in WP3 is overall responsible for the Partnerships' dissemination and outreach and will offer assistance or act as a sparring partner to the Partnership Communication Responsibles (ParCom) if needed.

The team will support with know-how, best practice and concrete answers to specific challenges or questions as much as possible, and will be available to jointly discuss views, expectations and needs.

7.5 Close DEC-cooperation with research projects

The overall purpose of this DEC strategy and plan “to give visibility to the DEC activities of the AGROECOLOGY Partnership and to maximize impacts in terms of awareness, engagement, and acceptance as a necessary precondition to boost its potential for exploitation and valorisation” applies equally to the individual research projects under the Agroecology Partnership.

It is therefore highly recommended to encourage project coordinators to appoint a designated Project Communication Responsible (ProCom) with resources and funds specifically dedicated to communicating key project outcomes and exploitable results in close cooperation with the WP3 communication team and activities.

The opportunity of sparring and assistance from the WP3 communication team will naturally also apply for the appointed ProComs, both in terms of identifying target audiences, appropriate communication channels and tone of voice, but also, for conveying a message through the Partnership communication channels as well as those made available by the ParComs. Thereby, creating synergies between the Partnership and the projects to maximise the outreach of the research projects DEC-activities.

7.6 Acknowledgement of the EU co-funding

Communication activities of the partners (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 must acknowledge EU support and display

the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):



Figure 5: EU-Logo.

Moreover, it must indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):
“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.”

8 The DEC plan

Each work package is asked to fill in the estimated timing of relevant DEC tasks and activities. The communication team as well as each partner uses a living document, the DEC plan, to coordinate the dissemination, communication and exploitation activities of the Partnership.

The timing of initiatives is expected to change as the Partnership move forward. For that reason, the DEC plan is flexible.

The spreadsheet below will be revised and updated continuously during the Partnership. This screenshot is dated 25 June 2024:



AGROECOLOGY PARTNERSHIP		Project: Year / Month	Y1 - 6	Y1 - 12	Y2 - 18	Y2 - 24	Y3 - 30	Y3 - 36	Y4 - 42	Y4 - 48	Y5 - 54	Y5 - 60
WP1	Coordination, administration and management	Internal communication - links to WP3 in regards to the intranet										
WP2	Science-Policy	Capacity building Raise awareness T2.3 Annual 2-day event Material produced with WP3		x								
WP3	Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication (DEC)	DEC strategy - ongoing improvement Website/intranet (internal communication WP1)/long-term repository Social media WP4 - SRIA WP7 - Connecting with national/Regional representatives WP8 Collaborative knowledge platform T3.5 Ongoing project meetings/knowledge exchange T3.5 Biannual conference for entire AGROECOLOGY T3.6 Capacity building: bimonthly webinars, in-person-training (kick-off, mid-/end term) T3.6 Yearly summerschools/masterclass for stakeholders	x							x		
WP4	Updating the SRIA and defining the ΔWPs of ΔAGROECOLOGY	T4.1.3 Launching open consultation process for updating SRIA w/WP3 online T4.3 Publication of SRIA updates w/ WP3 guidance - T4.3.2 Follow-up (D4.1 + D4.2)										x
WP5	Data and Monitoring for ΔE transition	T5.1. Workshop series - capitalising experience on monitoring agroecology T5.1. Questionnaire - understanding monitoring needs T5.1. Webinar for FAIR Data Management (during kick-off funded projects - WP6) T5.2. Online survey - Conceptual Framework T5.2. Validation workshop preliminary Conceptual Framework T5.2. Participatory workshop I - Conceptual Framework T5.2. Participatory workshop II - Conceptual Framework T5.2. Participatory workshop III - Conceptual Framework T5.2. Participatory workshop Framework updating T5.3. Workshop identify indicators (TBD) T5.4. Validation workshop methodological framework indicators for projects T5.5. Workshops design and validation data infrastructure for monitoring (TBD) T5.6. Workshops Decision Support Tools (TBD)		x x x x x x	? x		? x		? x		? x	
WP6	Managing transnational call activities	Call pre- and actual announcement - WP3 announcement/campaign online/SoMe Announcement of selected funded projects Call text information available online	x x x	x x x		x x x		x x x		x x x		x x x
WP7	Expanding the capacities of LLs and RIs	T7.1 Conversations on agroecology T7.2 Review of mapping methods and results T7.2 Methodological approaches in agroecology transition research T7.2 Methodological framework T7.4 Systematic review of participatory methods	x x x	x x x	x x x	x x x	x x x	x x x	x x x	x x x		
WP8	T7.6 Report on existing data environments on agroecology	T7.6 Programme and tools for the sharing of best practice		x								
WP9	Coordination of the European Network of ΔE LLs & RIs	T8.4 The Collaborative knowledge platform will be linked to the Partnership's website developed in T3.2. That platform will be based on experience from the Organic Farm Knowledge Platform. The repository will be based on the already existing Organic Eprints T8.4 Training and/or webinars (tutorials) - WP3 announcements, etc T8.4 Promotion of platform among partners (network and partnership) and target groups/stakeholders. Animate the platform and make sure materials etc are submitted T8.5 A DEC strategy (living document updated bi-annually) specific to the Network will be T8.6 Collaborating with other international networks and projects		x		x						
	Ethics requirements											

9 Monitoring and evaluation of DEC activities

The AGROECOLOGY Partnership assesses the need of evaluation on individual task level. If, when and how monitoring and evaluation will take place depends on what is appropriate in relation to the specific DEC task or activity.

9.1 Evaluation of DEC activities across the Partnership

The DEC efforts of the Partnership consist of tasks and activities on various areas and levels. The DEC activities vary in size and complexity as well. The need for evaluation depends on the specific activity. At the same time, the communication team strives to getting the highest effect possible from its efforts.

For the three reasons mentioned above, an annual, large-scale evaluation of all DEC-related efforts across the entire Partnership is not suitable to the situation.

9.2 Continuous monitoring and evaluation of DEC activities followed by immediate changes when necessary

The DEC strategy and plan is dynamic and includes a built-in flexibility to overcome unforeseen challenges as well as an ability to identify arising opportunities that may come.

A key part of this strategy is to anticipate some level of societal change as well as changes within the Partnership itself. Therefore, the communication team expects to adapt the strategy and plan continuously as the context evolves over the duration of the Partnership.

This iterative process of constantly improving will not only strengthen the quality and ensure maximum output for participants and receivers of content. The dynamic approach will also keep activities aligned with internal and external development and societal changes.

9.3 Monitoring of the Partnerships central communication channels

The WP3 communication team will use a combination of online monitoring tools and indicators to evaluate the outreach and productivity through the Partnerships central communication channels.

The current expectations are listed as KPIs for year 1 (M1-M12) to make a quantitative performance assessment possible regarding the central communication channels. The communication team will establish new KPIs once per year based on the evaluation of the performance of the previous year.

The first evaluation of the central communication channels will take place in January 2025 (M13).

Data from tools monitoring the activity, as well as the level of success with the efforts on the Partnership's central communication channels (website, social media, newsletter and bulletin), will

allow the communication team to indicate the potential need for activating corrective measures, such as redirecting focus, change approach, or increase, decrease or replace individual DEC activities.