



**LAND4FLOOD**  
NATURAL FLOOD RETENTION ON PRIVATE LAND



**cost**  
EUROPEAN COOPERATION  
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**CA16209**

***Natural Flood Retention on Private Land***

***(Land4Flood)***

***Communication Plan***

***(2018)***

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## 2. Introduction

*This document describes the dissemination and communication plan for the COST Action “Land4Flood”, including the different tools, channels and means of communication that will be implemented throughout the Action duration. The plan also describes the target groups of the dissemination strategy. It contains the main strategic and operative guide that shall govern the overall Action dissemination and communication activities. These guidelines will help to ensure that relevant information is shared with appropriate audiences on a timely basis by the most effective means. The dissemination activities will be continuously monitored during the Action. The main objective of the communication activities is to raise awareness about the Action activities and disseminate information in a consistent and coherent manner about its results and maximize its impacts.*

*When addressing the communication plan, we ask that you consider the triple-aspects of the plan*

- *addressing the internal activities planned and carried out (mostly set out in the MoU)*
- *addressing the European and regional level of stakeholders. This mainly affects the policy-level*
- *addressing the local, sub-national and transnational level, where we mainly will engage with stakeholders directly, either through local workshops or through the activities of the national action members.*

*The first two aspects the Action will be able to control where, when and how we engage. For the third it will to a large degree be depending upon the interest and involvement of the national action members. Thus, this plan will primarily focus on the first two, reaching out to the third when possible, and also to imply the need for active participation from national members on sub-national/local level*

## 2. Action description

*Climate change increases the frequency and intensity of future flood events, leading to higher costs of flood damages and increasing the public demand for protective measures. Traditional flood protection measures, mainly based on grey infrastructure (i.e. dikes, dams, etc), are not sufficient to cope with dynamic flood risk alone. Nature-based solutions such as Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM) are promising options to mitigate flood risks as a complement to grey infrastructure. These types of measures not only serve to reduce risk, they also provide additional ecosystem services including increased biodiversity and recreation opportunities. However, a common characteristic of green infrastructure measures is that they often claim more land than traditional methods.*

*Land4Flood is to consider multifunctional land uses, which enable temporary flood retention and flood storage on private land without restricting the provision of other ecosystem services. The reconciliation of flood risk management and land management is needed. Since all NWRM primarily need to be implemented on private land the consideration of multiple aspects includes: economic issues (e.g. how to compensate for or incentivize flood retention services); property rights issues (e.g. how to allow temporary flood storage on private land); issues of public participation (e.g. how to ensure the involvement of private landowners) as well as issues of public subsidies (e.g. how to integrate/mainstream flood retention in agricultural subsidies). Land4Flood COST Action aims to address these different aspects, and to establish a common knowledge base and channels of communication among scientists, regulators, landowners and other stakeholders in field.*

## 3. Action implementation

*The Action is carried out by a high-quality network of different participants from thirty-four (34) different COST countries in Europe, three (3) Near Neighbour Countries and two (2) International Partner Countries. The Action is led by the Action Chair Prof Lenka SLAVIKOVA of the Jana Evangelista Purkyně University of the Czech Republic.*

## 4. The Scope of work and objectives

*This document describes a general communication strategy and specific activities dedicated to communication of the COST Action. The Communication Plan aims to address activities and communications that will:*

- Inform and engage the relevant stakeholders in Europe;*
- Raise awareness around the Action and its communication activities, objectives and impact;*

*The content of this activity involves all the relevant tasks that will allow the accomplishment of the highest level of dissemination and diffusion of the Action objectives, Actions and results. This activity will run for the whole duration of the Action i.e. 14/09/2017 until 13/09/2021.*

*The specific activities proposed are:*

- *Communication with the stakeholders and dissemination of the Action results.*
- *Continuous update of the Action website.*
- *Development and distribution of informative material (newsletters, flyer, poster etc.).*
  - o *Publication in national and international scientific and technical journals and conference proceedings.*
  - o *Social media utilization.*
  - o *Organization and participation in workshops, conferences & other events.*

*The objectives of the dissemination and communication plan are to:*

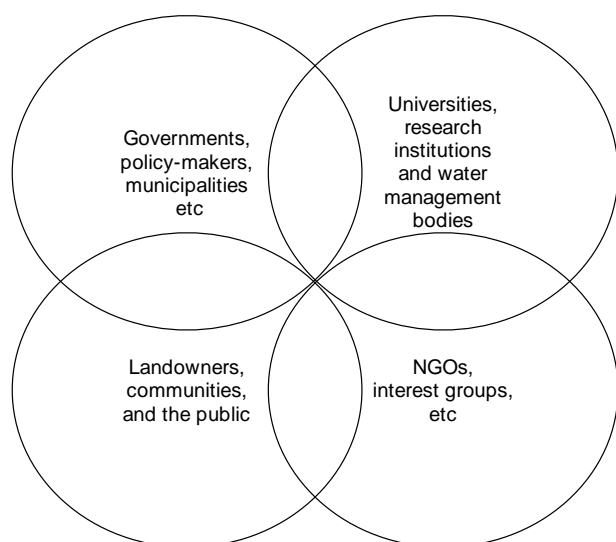
- *Identify the target groups, communication tools and distribution channels for the Action dissemination and communication activities.*
- *Create an identity to the Action through graphically coherent material.*
- *Plan how to share the knowledge gained in the Action, i.e. to which target groups each activity and results are relevant, as well as the adequate channels to address these.*
- *Define the period for dissemination and communication activities and the responsible partner for the implementation.*
- *Interact with a wide audience through the internet, promotional materials and events*

*The Science Communication Manager (SCM) will be in charge of developing, maintaining and managing the Communication Strategy of Land4Flood. Key responsibilities of the SCM are to:*

- *Plan and coordinate the implementation of communication activities at Action level.*
- *Set the tone for internal and external communications.*
- *Maintain records of communication activities.*
- *Be the central point of contact with the COST Association for communication activities only.*
- *Provide information to interested partners and other stakeholders in a convenient format.*

## 5. The targeted audiences

*The main Audiences of the Land4Flood Action are the following:*



*Action activities are not only limited to the specified meetings/activities listed in the MoU. We strongly will help to encourage and promote national/regional activities instigated by COST-participants/stakeholder at local, national and regional level. The Action's communication activities will target the audiences above, with the main purpose of giving support to dissemination activities by:*

- *Raising the level of awareness about the need to combine traditional flood protection measures with nature-based solutions*
- *Promoting the Action interests and goals in the socio-political contexts implemented through negotiation and mobilizing processes.*
- *Engaging (with) the stakeholders during conferences, workshops, training schools and other targeted events.*
- *Through STSMs especially, engage in/with social science researchers and promote stakeholder involvement*
- *Through supportive actions, promote ad-hoc and informal activities on local level between involved stakeholder-groups*
- *Sharing the results and outcome of the Action.*

## 6. The Actions visual identity

*The Action logo will be used together with the COST logo. All dissemination materials will be prepared in line with the visual identity of the Action to enable effective “branding” of the Action. The design of the Action*

website will also represent the Action identity. The logos will appear on all public documents, publications etc. in order to increase visibility of the Action. Participants are going to be provided with useful working tools that will be used and adopted along the Action implementation such as:

- *Template for PowerPoint presentations*
- *Template for Word documents*
- *Template for posters*

## **7. The Communication Strategy**

*This document is designed to support the overall and specific communication and visibility objectives of the Action. Specifically, it is aimed at detailing the structure and the goals of the two main levels of the Action communication strategy:*

- *Internal communication*
- *External communication*

*An important aspect will be to promote and support efforts for translating Action material into national languages. We strongly feel that to be necessary to reach and engage stakeholders on sub-national/local levels.*

*The strategy identifies approaches and tools to keep the stakeholders regularly informed, and to ensure the visibility of the Action. On visibility, the strategy contains the requirements to be undertaken by all implementing members of the COST Action and suggests activities that may be incorporated to build a strong communication and visibility plan. Communication objectives are the following:*

- *Ensuring effective communication between groups;*
- *Ensuring timely notices for requirements/meetings;*
- *Ensuring optimum results for all communications and Action expectations;*
- *Measure the results of the communication strategy execution and revise accordingly;*
- *In order to maximize the impact of communication efforts:*
  - *Activities need to be timely;*
  - *Information used must be accurate;*
  - *Messages should interest the target audience(s);*
  - *Activities should be appropriate in terms of resources (human and financial);*
- *Effective communication is critical to the successful implementation of the Action, in order to ensure that the Action results are disseminated to the widest possible audience;*
- *Communication activities will when appropriate be implemented in partnership relations with other relevant/similar programmes or initiatives.*

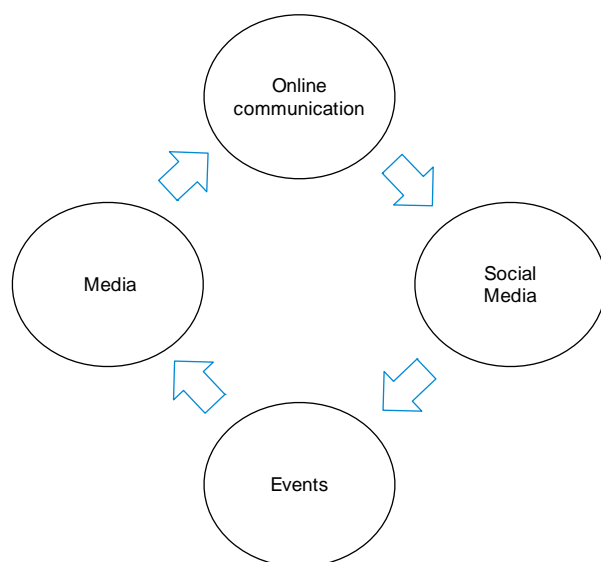
## 8. The Communication Plan

### 8.1. Internal communication

The Action seeks to be transparent both in relation to the Action participants as well as towards external stakeholders with interest in the subject. The dedicated webpage of the Action will be used throughout the Action's lifetime.

### 8.2. External communication

The external communication and dissemination activities will be implemented using different approaches in order to diversify and maximize the outreach to the target groups and all the stakeholders accordingly. They include:



The table below briefly describes the most relevant channels, methods, tools and materials, which will be used by the Action.

Audience	Channel	Tools
MC and Members	Internal communications	E-mail: GoogleGroup
Network of Action Members	Social media – Twitter ( <a href="#">@Land4Flood</a> )	Dedicated COST Action accounts, members posts using agreed hashtags
All stakeholders and public	Action website	Regularly updated to show past and upcoming activities, publications and disseminations
All stakeholders and public	Media; newsletters	At regular intervals



	<i>Media; press releases</i>	<i>When appropriate</i>
	<i>Partners' websites</i>	<i>Links to the Action website, news about the Action</i>
	<i>Partners' newsletters</i>	<i>Links to the Action, news about the Action website</i>
<i>All stakeholders</i>	<i>Events; workshops and conferences</i>	<i>Presentation of Action activities, posters, flyer dissemination, roundtable, panel discussions etc.</i>  <i>- Scientific publications presented (see MoU) (researchers)</i>
	<i>Journals, scientific publications</i>	<i>Regularly</i>
	<i>Journals, special issues</i>	<i>When appropriate</i>
	<i>Final publication; edited book</i>	<i>At closure of Action</i>

### 8.3. Online communication

*Online communication includes all channels through which the target groups and stakeholders can reach the Action on the Internet. This will be done through the Action website, and partners' websites (links to the COST Action). In addition, online press will be used for the release of articles. The Science Communication Manager will monitor the results, based on the information provided by the member of the Action and the Core Group.*

*The website will be regularly updated with news about the Actions activities, such as meetings, workshops, publications, disseminations, short term scientific missions and training schools. Activities will be announced in due time before taking place.*

*The newsletter and press releases will be distributed via the Action website as well as via e-mail to the networks of contacts of the members/Action participants. Press releases will be drafted by the Science Communication Manager in collaboration with Core Group members and newsletters by the Core Group with input from other members.*

### Action website (<http://www.land4flood.eu/>)

*A professional and user-friendly website has been developed for the COST Action with the aim of making the Action results publicly available, offering easy access from anywhere in the world and working as a strong dissemination tool addressing all relevant stakeholder groups. The website will provide information on the Action results, Action activities and events as well as information on other relevant issues.*

*The focus of the website will be on the provision of relevant information to interested stakeholders, including information for the different working groups. The website will include the COST features, COST logo, EU emblem and accompanying text as indicated in the Dissemination Guidelines of the programme.*

## Members and participating organisations' websites

*All Action partners aim to include a link to the Land4Flood website in their own organisations website.*

## 8.4. Social media

*Through social networks we will aim to provide timely and up to date information about Action activities, thus interacting with the target groups involved in and concerned by the Action. Information about the content that will be uploaded on the Action website will be shared across the Action social media accounts. By doing so, we will gain more visibility for the Action, managing thus, to extend the coverage of the Action. The Action Twitter Account is @Land4Flood.*

*The Action members will make use of their own institutional social media accounts (LinkedIn and Twitter) to distribute news on a regular basis.*

*Whenever possible, the news will also be distributed through the official social media channels of COST Association.*

*(see <https://twitter.com/COSTprogramme>, and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/COST-office>)*

*These accounts will actively be used as additional distribution channels of the Action results.*

## 8.5. Newsletters

*A newsletter will be published regularly (see MoU) in order to report on the Action activities and develop awareness about the topics covered by the Action, but more importantly about the Action and the network. The main contents of these newsletters shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following items:*

- *Welcome note*
- *A brief summary of the newsletter content*
- *Reporting on events*
- *List of relevant coming workshops, training schools, short-term scientific missions etc.*
- *Progress of the Action in terms of publications and activities/results*
- *Personal stories*

## 8.6. Media

*Media is known to be an effective way to reach not only stakeholders, but also the public. The members of the Network will look for opportunities to publish articles about the Action in local and European media.*

## 8.7. Conferences and events

*In order to achieve the maximum exposure of the Action results and to encourage the involvement of the stakeholders, the members of the Action in collaboration with the WG leaders and the Action Chair will present Land4Flood at major relevant conferences and workshops.*

## 9. Monitoring

*An action of communication can be defined as “effective and efficient” when it reaches and is received correctly by its target. The effectiveness and efficiency of the actions of information and public awareness depend on the content transmitted, the channel used, and not least how the recipients esteem and value the information. The target audience should then recognize the information transmitted and understand it, as it was intended by the sender. In order to measure the efficacy of the tools included in this Action, the SCM will keep track on the below mentioned indicators, that will determine the efficient implementation of the Communication Plan. For consistency purposes it is suggested to perform this exercise at the same time as reporting to the COST Association.*

- *Appearance of the logo in all material and dissemination activities created throughout the Action.*
- *Number of visits to Actions website.*
- *Quantity of appearances in media (e.g. articles published in press/online, interviews etc.).*
- *Number of events attended by network members relevant to the Action.*
- *Number of newsletters and flyers disseminated.*
- *Number of recipients/subscribers of the Actions newsletter.*
- *Number of conferences and workshops organized.*
- *Number of Tweets on the Actions Twitter account and re-tweets.*
- *Number of followers on the Actions Twitter account.*
- *Number of members on the Actions LinkedIn account.*
- *Number of presentations of the Action at conferences or events (presentation, poster, paper).*
- *Number of scientific publications.*

*Monitoring if and how the contents have been received, understood and valued, is more difficult to monitor. Still the Core Group will try to use more qualitative methods to establish an understanding of how the contents are received. We will mainly approach this through reflective discussions with stakeholders at meetings, and to a lesser degree through including open ended questions in post-MC/WG meetings surveys*

*In addition, Action partners must ensure that:*

- *Signed list of participants in hardcopy is kept for all workshops, conferences, seminars and events organized during the Action lifetime*
- *Presentations are in accordance with the specific templates provided.*
- *Photos are being taken as evidence of Action implementation.*

## 10. Risks and Mitigation Measures

*The implementation of the communication plan can be influenced by a wide range of factors, both internal and external.*

<i>DESCRIPTION OF THE RISKS</i>	<i>PROPOSED RISK-MITIGATION MEASURES</i>
<i>Low level of engagement/Disengagement of the Action members</i>	<i>Ensure frequent and equal interaction with all Action members to obtain regular updates.</i>
<i>Low level of awareness about the activities of Land4Flood from the targeted audiences</i>	<i>Regular updates of quality content on the Action's activities on available Communication Channels (the Actions Webpage and Social Media Platforms)</i>
<i>Lack of structure in the communication activities</i>	<i>Set-up regular editorial meetings with the Core Group members to define the content and schedule of the communication activities.</i>
<i>Noncompliance to the agreed templates and/ or formats of documents, reports etc.</i>	<i>These will be agreed upon and made available to all. The Science Communication Manager will monitor throughout the Action and intervene to take corrective Actions, where necessary.</i>
<i>Insufficient effort by partners to publicize the Action and its results at national/European level</i>	<i>The Science Communication Manager will monitor effort at regular intervals and will discuss progress during MC meetings, with the Core Group and Chair/Vice-Chair, so as to prevent or correct such incidences.</i>
<i>Lack of interest by stakeholders' groups in the Action</i>	<i>Efforts will be made throughout the lifecycle of the Action through meetings, workshops etc. to engage and interact with stakeholders to prevent or correct such incidences.</i>
<i>Poor quality of printed or other material delivered by a sub-contractor</i>	<i>The Science Communication Manager will monitor the material produced. If it occurs, sub-contractors will be asked to replace, free of charge, the products as per instructions given in the beginning.</i>

## 11. Role of the partners

*The SCM, in close cooperation with the Chair of the COST Action, will be responsible for the Action dissemination and communication plan, guarantee consistency in the messages delivered and ensure all the targets are successfully reached. All Action partners will contribute to the implementation of the stakeholder and public engagement strategy and play a key role in networking with stakeholders.*

*Specifically, the Action participants will themselves be responsible for:*

- Creating bridges between the Action and the national/local networks they are involved in;*
- Providing input to the content of the Action website, communication materials and media channels;*
- Translating relevant action documents to national languages*
- Disseminating the activities and results of the Action through to own social media channels;*
- Disseminating the activities and results of the Action at events/fairs where they participate.*

## 12. Data processing

*Data coming from the Action website usage, social media, dissemination and networking activities will be electronically stored. Action members will also directly provide information about specific companies, contact people, etc., from the target groups of interest for the Action. No personal information beyond name, corporate email address and company address and telephone will be stored. The network and the COST Association officers will have access to this information. No use of this information unrelated to the Action will be made. Any public data published on the website can be used also by third parties.*

*All and any personal information will be collected and stored in accordance with the COST GDPR rules and practices*

## 13. Contacts

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