



D7.6 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Supplementary report

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|-------------|---|
| AUTH | Aristotle University of Thessaloniki |
| BOKU | University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences |
| CDUE | Communication, dissemination, up-scaling and exploitation |
| D | Deliverable |
| EC | European Commission |
| HAW | Hamburg University of Applied Sciences |
| HE | Horizon Europe |
| IGAR | Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy |
| LU | Latvian University |
| M | Month |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| PC | Project Coordinator |
| T | Task |
| UCPH | University of Copenhagen |
| WP | Work Package |



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1. Executive Summary

This document, together with the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy website (<https://europe-land.eu/join-us/>) represents the deliverable D7.6 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy of the Europe-LAND project, developed within Task T7.3 of Work Package (WP) 7, due in month M6.

This document forms the supplementary report to the stakeholder engagement strategy website, describing how stakeholders will be targeted to facilitate policy design and implementation. The document details the Europe-LAND stakeholder engagement strategy and its two main elements, the stakeholder pool and the participatory actions planned over the course of the project, as well as some ethical aspects to be considered for its implementation.

For any comments on the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy of the Europe-LAND project, please contact the Project Coordinator:

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1. Introduction

In order to facilitate the uptake of results produced by the Europe-LAND project into policy design and implementation, the project developed a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, outlining relevant stakeholders of the project and how they may be engaged in participatory actions, specifically targeted at them. This document “Stakeholder Engagement Strategy – supplementary report” and the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy website form the deliverable D7.6 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, developed in the scope of WP 7, Task 7.3.

Different groups of stakeholders have different needs regarding information and outcomes from the project and how these might be presented. As such, Europe-LAND has implemented a targeted approach towards stakeholder engagement, by first defining different stakeholder groups relevant to the project and developing the stakeholder pool, which allows stakeholders to be categorized by type, field of interest and geographical location. In this way, each stakeholder can be easily identified according to relevant characteristics. In a second step, the Europe-LAND project has scheduled participatory actions specifically targeted towards one or more groups of stakeholders, delivering project outputs in the most relevant and best accessible ways. This combination of identification of stakeholders and planning of targeted actions forms the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy of the project.

The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy is prominently presented on the Europe-LAND website to allow potential stakeholders to directly interact with the project and join the pool of stakeholders. Thus, the website is an important part of the deliverable D7.6. This document, the so-called ‘Supplementary Report’ serves to provide more information on the motivation and underlying structure of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy of Europe-LAND.

2. Stakeholder pool

In the frame of WP3, the project consortium jointly compiled an extensive list of relevant stakeholder groups. Partners were asked to provide (publicly available) local, regional and national stakeholder data relevant to their work and country, in order to be used as a basis for the work conducted especially in tasks T3.2, T3.3 and T3.4 and as preparation for the Milestone 2 “Stakeholder Identification and Needs Analysis”. This list serves as a basis for the stakeholder pool for WP7. Desk research tapped into scientific databases to identify further relevant land use experts and stakeholders, expanding the stakeholder pool in a next step even further. To support a continuous growth of the stakeholder pool, all participants in project events and activities are iteratively asked to join the stakeholder pool as well as the Europe-LAND Community on social media. Finally, the project website provides an online form for stakeholders to join the stakeholder pool with only a few clicks.

In signing up to the stakeholder pool through the website, potential stakeholders are asked to provide the following information:

- country,
- organization’s name in national language,



- organization's name in English,
- geographic coverage/level (national, regional, local),
- stakeholder group (see section 3),
- main domain or responsibility,
- name of contact person,
- contact email,
- consent to receive project information and
- interest in project outputs (multiple choice out of several expected project results).

The information collected allows for stakeholders to be categorised by country, stakeholder group, field of work or interest in project outputs, thus enabling project information to be disseminated more effectively to relevant groups, to send invitations for targeted events, to find experts for relevant project input, as speakers in events, co-authors in scientific publications and for collaborations in other joint-work.

Contact information due to data protection is kept separate and confidential by HAW as WP 7 lead and project coordinator (PC). It is available to partners only after signing a confidentiality agreement, to be used solely within the project's scope. All data is collected and handled adhering to the Europe-LAND Data Management Plan (see D1.5).

The stakeholder pool with redacted personal data can be found on the project **HiDrive at WP7/T7.3 Strategic Stakeholder Engagement/ Stakeholder Pool**.

Apart from the list of stakeholders, the Europe-LAND project also curated a list of identified relevant European projects for potential collaborations, synergies and exchanges. The list of relevant projects is to be regarded as a living document and can be found on the project **HiDrive at WP7/T7.3 Strategic Stakeholder Engagement/Exchange with other projects**.

3. Levels of stakeholder engagement

The Europe-LAND project has identified groups of stakeholders crucial to ensure the proper implementation, dissemination and potential exploitation of project results into policy and practice, towards a more sustainable European land-use. The identified groups of stakeholders are outlined below. This detailed differentiation of stakeholders into distinctive groups allows to better target information provision to meet individual stakeholder needs.

1. **Academia:** research and academia

The engagement of experts from research and academia in various fields (sustainability, land-use, land management, land cover change, modeling, telecoupling, mapping, social sciences, etc.) is crucial to broadening the knowledge base on project-relevant fields both within the project consortium to fill potential expertise gaps, as well as beyond the project by sharing project results. **Importance for project scope: medium**



2. Industry: land user (farmer), land user (forester), land manager, business

Stakeholders from the industry are involved during the scope of the project in several ways. For one, they are direct subject of the research into land-use behaviour and drivers behind land-use decisions, and are involved in focus groups, interviews, surveys and events within the living lab framework. They are also a main target group for dissemination and capacity building, especially within WP 6 and 7, as the capacity building seminars, the Europe-LAND toolbox, presentations at events and conferences etc. are specifically aimed at them. As such, they are a valuable stakeholder group as they both deliver valuable input to the project research and are also able to directly implement and test project outcomes and recommendations. **Importance for project scope: high**

3. Policy/government: local authority (local administration), Regional authority (regional administration), National authority (central government, related ministries and agencies); additionally EU representatives

Stakeholders from policy and government are relevant to the project, as they are actively engaged with and design the legal frameworks in which land-use decisions are made on a local, regional, national and international level. Connecting with this group of stakeholders allows the project to identify existing policies and upcoming developments, as well as policy and decision-making knowledge needs and potential hurdles to transferring EU legislation onto smaller scales. On the other hand, sustainably reaching out to this group allows to strengthen the uptake of policy recommendations made by the Europe-LAND project into practice. Engaging local authorities, especially in the regions of the eight project case studies, is beneficial in terms of participatory co-creation of knowledge and may particularly help to facilitate knowledge sharing on new land use and land management knowledge as well as formulate recommendations addressing also local needs and constraints. **Importance for project scope: high**

In addition to disseminating and sharing project knowledge and results with local and national policy and government entities, the Europe-LAND project also aims to liaise with EU representatives, to foster the exchange between science and policy. EU representatives are an important group to engage in the scope of the project as they are closest to the supranational EU policy development and project results may thus directly inform land use and land management related decision-making processes. This is reflected in the planning of one participatory action aimed at EU representatives (see chapter 5.3 Yearly Science-Policy Dialogue).

4. Societal actors/community: non-governmental organization (NGO), agricultural organization, citizen association, the media

Community-based and societal stakeholders may support the implementation of project outputs and policy into everyday practice and raise awareness on sustainability issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss in relation to land-use. Media coverage is an important part of project promotion as it increases the local, regional and national reach, potentially informing further stakeholders about the project, who in turn might reach out to engage with the project. **Social actors are a valuable part of our stakeholder pool and should be actively involved in the dialogue. Social actors have the opportunity to share their perspectives, insights and experiences through webinars and dialogue formats. Their**

input can help make our stakeholder engagement strategy even more effective and bring local needs and social challenges into the dialogue **Importance for project scope: low**

5. Other EU projects

Whilst not included in the stakeholder identification performed within WP 3, other EU projects on related land-use and land cover topics are important for the Europe-LAND project to engage with, as this offers opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration on events, outreach actions and scientific exchange and collaborations. Furthermore, these contacts will be utilised in the frame of the Europe-LAND Science-Policy Dialogue scheme. A separate list of relevant EU projects was collected by WP 7 leads and is continuously updated. **Importance for project scope: high/medium**

4. Participatory actions for stakeholder engagement

To facilitate policy design and implementation and strengthen the uptake of project results and output, a variety of participatory actions involving the identified groups of stakeholders were developed and scheduled over the course of the project. The main actions and the stakeholder groups they are targeting are detailed in the following section.

5.1 Expert webinar series

To establish the role of Europe-LAND and to engage stakeholders early on, an expert webinar series was scheduled for the first year of the project, as indicated in the Grant Agreement. First and foremost, it is meant to raise awareness of the project and its undertakings, followed by gaining and reflecting on concrete feedback from expert stakeholders on key motivations and drivers behind land-use decisions. Finally, the project showcases and invites external experts to support increasing the understanding and the awareness of climate change and biodiversity challenges linked with land use and land management across Europe.

The expert webinar series is open to all stakeholder groups, but with emphasis on experts from academia, industry, land-users and local authorities, as well as societal actors. Utilizing the existing stakeholder pool, stakeholders from these groups are formally invited to attend, in addition to the broad promotion of the events via social media and the project website as well as partner networks. Attendees are encouraged to join the stakeholder pool to broaden the project's network.

After the finalization of the initial 6 webinars planned for the expert webinar series, it is envisaged to schedule further webinars and events, virtually promoting and discussing concrete project results and to facilitate the uptake of project outcomes. Table 1 lists the 6 scheduled webinars as well as the tentative suggestions for two additional webinars.

Table. 1: Expert webinar series overview



| Webinar No. | Tentative Date | Titel | Responsible partners for implementation |
|-------------|--|--|---|
| 1 | Thursday 26 Oct 2023, 11:00-12:00h (CET) | Towards Sustainable Land-use Strategies in the Context of Climate Change and Biodiversity Challenges in Europe - Introducing the Europe-LAND project | HAW, all WP leaders |
| 2 | Thursday 23 Nov 2023, 13:00-14:00h (CET) | Harmonization of European land use data – challenges and opportunities | HAW, UCPH |
| 3 | Thursday 18 Jan 2024, 13:00-14:00h (CET) | Towards sustainable European land-use strategies – The importance of participatory approaches | HAW, IGAR |
| 4 | Thursday 15 Feb 2024, 13:00-14:00h (CET) | Mapping future land-use and land cover patterns – the Europe-LAND approach | HAW, LU |
| 5 | Thursday 14 Mar 2024, 13:00-14:00h (CET) | In the spotlight: the Europe-LAND case studies | HAW, IGAR, BOKU |
| 6 | Thursday 18 Apr 2024, 13:00-14:00h (CET) | Exploring the potential of Telecoupling for improving European land management | HAW, SUA |
| 7 | <i>TBC</i> | <i>Policy work within Europe-LAND</i> | <i>HAW, IGAR</i> |
| 8 | <i>TBC</i> | <i>The Europe-LAND toolbox</i> | <i>HAW, AUTH</i> |

5.2 Expert exchanges

Over the course of the project, partners engage with a range of experts on project relevant topics, from land-use to modelling, policy and methodological approaches. These exchanges range from consultations during meetings and workshops, discussions at events and conferences, network engagement to mid-term collaborations on subtasks and joint publications. The goal is to achieve synergies with mutual benefits for all. The project can profit from expertise and direct input on relevant issues whilst external experts can benefit from project outputs, results and opportunities for joint work. Whilst a lot of these exchanges take place at public events or within the professional networks of project partners, the stakeholder pool can act to facilitate these exchanges by offering access to more experts from specific fields, industries or geographical locations. Partners are encouraged to expand their exchanges during project work beyond their personal and professional networks to the project's stakeholder pool and invite relevant experts from external networks to join the stakeholder pool, so that other project partners might benefit from the connection and project dissemination might be intensified. Table 2 lists relevant networks project partners are part of, engaging with external experts.

This participatory action is aimed at stakeholders from the scientific community, industry and local authority, as well as community-based organizations.

Table 2: Networks with relevant groups of stakeholders which project partners are part of.



| Network name | Main field of focus | Relevant groups of stakeholders within the network | Associated project partner(s) |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------|
| Association of European Civil Engineering Faculties (AECEF) | Engineering | Academia and research | 02/AUTH |
| European Civil Engineering Education and Training (EUCEET) | Engineering | Academia and research | 02/AUTH |
| European School for Sustainability Science and Research (ESSSR) | Sustainability science | Academia and research | 01/HAW, 10/SUA |
| European Society for Rural Sociology (ESRS) | Nature and environmental care | Academia and research | 10/SUA |
| EUROSITE Remote sensing support group | Nature conservation | Conservation practitioners | 13/CU |
| Global Land Programme (GLP) | Land systems, sustainability | Academia and research | 04/UCPH, 12/IAMO |
| Polish Association of Environmental and Resource Economics | Environmental economics, environmental policy | Academia and research | 08/BUT |
| IGU Commission on Land Use and Land Cover Change | Land use and land cover change | Academia and research | 07/IGAR, 13/CU |
| Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) | Climate Science | Academia | 01/HAW |
| INVEST – European Universities Initiative | Sustainable development | Academia | 10/SUA |
| National Committee “Future Earth” of the Romanian Academy | Sustainability science | Academia and research | 07/IGAR |
| The Baltic University Programme (BUP) | Sustainable development | Academia | 01/HAW, 10/SUA |
| UN SDSN | Sustainability | Academia and research | 02/AUTH |

5.3 Yearly Science-Policy Dialogue

This participatory action is targeted towards EU representatives and relevant EU projects, who although not formally included as relevant stakeholder groups, are crucial to engage with for the successful implementation of the project outcomes into policy and science.

In order to align research and policy work with expectations and needs of the European Commission, and start policy work early, the Europe-LAND project is planning a yearly science-policy dialogue, also inviting other relevant EU projects working in the field of land-use and land cover change policy to

participate. For this process, Europe-LAND proposes the following 4-step procedure over the 4-year project duration (Figure 1).

Step 1 – 2024

To start the science-policy dialogue, Europe-LAND proposes as a first step to host a virtual roundtable with relevant Horizon Europe (HE) projects to identify policy issues covered by the project, to formulate first policy recommendations and identify open questions regarding policy work. EU representatives shall be invited as well, to share the European perspective. This first step will be scheduled within 2024.

Step 2 – 2025

As a second step, approximately one year after the first, the project proposes a workshop with HE projects to filter policy areas identified within step 1, to form sub-categories and to discuss open questions from the first step.

Step 3 – 2026

The third step of the proposed science-policy dialogue will invite EU representatives once more to a workshop, discussing the results of steps 1 and 2, in order to answer open policy questions, align the projects' work with EU policy objectives and to identify remaining knowledge and research gaps, in order to focus or, if necessary, re-focus project work.

Step 4 – 2027

The final step of the proposed science-policy dialogue will be the presentation of outcomes and achievements in the frame of the Europe-LAND final conference, to be held in 2027 in Hamburg, Germany, and organised by HAW Hamburg as PC.



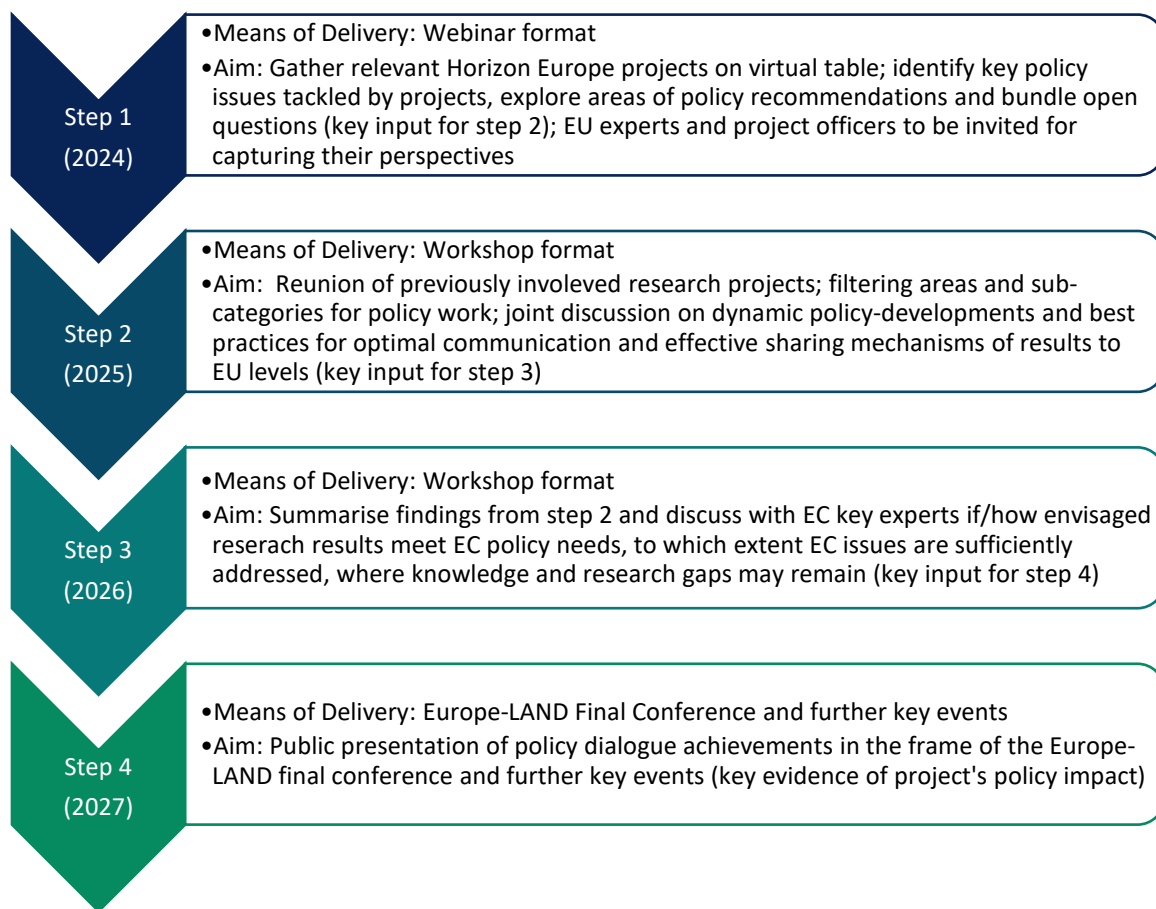


Figure 1: The Europe-LAND Science-Policy Dialogue.

The proposed format of the science-policy dialogue can ensure that the project work is well aligned with policy objectives and expectations from EU representatives and may maximise the uptake and implementation of policy recommendations made by the project. Simultaneously, by involving other relevant EU projects, the mutual benefit of identifying relevant policy areas, questions and knowledge gaps helps better align the work, both by each individual project as well as in joint collaborations. The EU might benefit from receiving policy input from multiple projects pre-coordinated and aligned to policy objectives and at the same time being able to answer policy relevant questions, increasing the quality and specificity of policy recommendations provided by the projects.

5.4 Continuous exchange with other projects

Besides the yearly science-policy dialogue, Europe-LAND also aims for a more continuous exchange with other relevant and related projects, both funded by EU agencies (Horizon Europe, Interreg, ect.) and national projects from the partner countries, where relevant. Connecting and engaging with relevant projects opens possibilities for joint work on events, promotion and dissemination actions, scientific publications, expert exchanges as well as spin-off projects.

As the focus of the joint work with projects is different from general stakeholder engagement, WP 7 leads have curated a separate list of projects besides the stakeholder engagement pool. It will similarly

be expanded over the course of the project by connecting with projects and inviting them to join the Europe-LAND network of projects.

Special emphasis from the very beginning has been put on exchanging with the two sister projects of Europe-LAND, PLUS Change and MOSAIC, with first contact already being established during first meetings, as well as appearances of the MOSAIC coordinator at the Europe-LAND kick-off meeting and vice versa. This connection is aimed at fostering synergies of the three projects on events and expert exchanges, seeking to avoid overlaps or duplication of actions.

In the scope of WP3 task T3.5 two online workshops are planned for 2024 and 2026, offering opportunities to connect with other relevant projects.

5.5 Final conference

At the end of the project, a final conference will be organised by HAW Hamburg, presenting the main project outputs and results. All project partners will be present and it will be open to all stakeholder groups to maximise the impact of the event. The goal is to host at least 100 participants from all stakeholder groups. Aside from conventional oral and poster presentations on technical and scientific results, it will also include an exhibition for more political decision-makers and land-users, presenting project activities such as the toolbox and outcomes of the Science-Policy Dialogue. The final conference will be widely promoted through the project website and social media, as well as networks of the partners and the stakeholder pool will be utilised to send targeted invitations to relevant stakeholders. The final conference is expected to be held in May 2027.

5.6 Other forms of stakeholder engagement

Various dissemination, communication, exploitation and upscaling activities, as outlined in D7.1 CDUE-Plan will be openly available and advertised through social media and the project website, feeding Europe-LAND's web-based Community of Practice, relevant stakeholders from the pool of stakeholders will be invited to join, targeted to or depending on their indicated fields of interest. Participants of CDUE activities will, in turn, also be invited to join the stakeholder pool, to receive more targeted information and engage in participatory actions planned within the stakeholder engagement strategy.

In scope of the project, a number of stakeholders will be directly involved in project work, in form of interviews, focus groups, questionnaires etc. within the living lab framework used in WP3 and 4. The stakeholder pool expanded over the duration of the project can supplement additional entries to the stakeholder identification carried out within WP 3 when identifying fitting participants. Participants in the research activities will be encouraged to join the extended stakeholder pool to engage in further project activities and benefit from project outcomes.

5. The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy



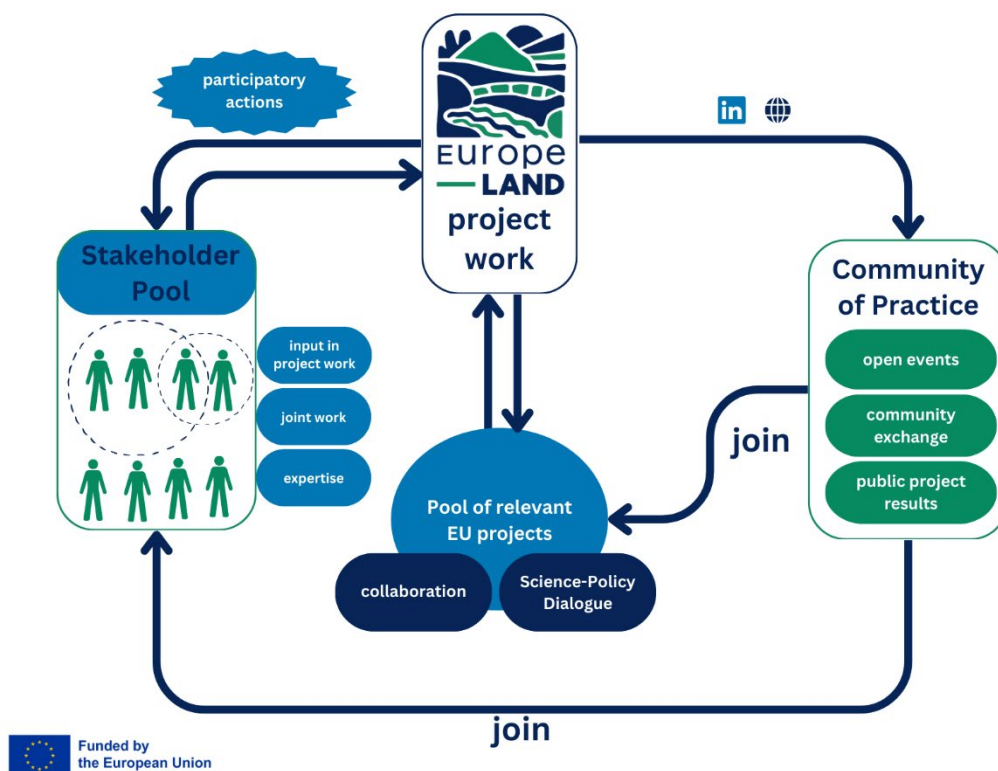


Figure 2: The Europe-LAND Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

The stakeholder engagement strategy integrates the identified groups of stakeholders and the participatory actions targeted at certain groups into one coherent plan, seeking to maximise the uptake of project results into policy, practice, academia and civil society. It strategically frames and complements the CDUE-Plan and its actions, which target anyone using the social media platforms and visiting the website, by offering the possibility of sending more targeted information and invitations to events to relevant groups of stakeholders. The stakeholder pool allows to select stakeholders by country, stakeholder group, and main domain to easily send invitations to targeted groups, call for joint-work, or identify missing expertise within the project scope. Similarly, by also allowing stakeholders to indicate their interest in selected project outcomes, they can receive information more tailored to their interests than social media accounts or the website. In this, the stakeholder pool optimises stakeholder engagement both for the project Europe-LAND as well as for the stakeholders themselves.

The stakeholder pool also aids in identifying and inviting relevant groups of stakeholders to the participatory actions that are specifically targeted at one or more groups of stakeholders. Each participatory action is designed to deliver the most relevant project inputs to policy design and implementation to each group. As such, the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy enables the project to more effectively target its outputs to maximise the implementation of project outputs in policy and practice, whilst also offering mutual benefits to the project and its stakeholders. Figure 2 describes the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy of the Europe-LAND project.

7. The stakeholder engagement website

In order to make information on the stakeholder engagement strategy easily accessible, the Europe-LAND project website contains a dedicated section on stakeholder engagement, developed as part of this deliverable D7.6. It is available here: <https://europe-land.eu/join-us/>, visible on the website as a permanent button in the top-right corner of the page, labeled “Join Us”.

The page displays Figure 1 of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. It starts with an introductory text outlining the purpose of the stakeholder engagement strategy. It then calls for stakeholders to register the stakeholder pool by clicking a button and filling in a registration form, asking the relevant information (see section 2), including consent to have their personal data added to the database. The website also links to the Europe-LAND LinkedIn account, to connect and receive further updates on the project. It then contains five collapsible sub-sections detailing information on the participatory actions planned:

- Expert Webinar Series
- Expert Exchanges
- Science-Policy Dialogue
- Continuous collaboration with other projects
- Final conference.

The sub-section on the continuous collaboration with other projects also contains another form to join the separate database of related projects.

By presenting the main facts about the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and planned participatory actions and making it easy for users to register to the stakeholder pool, the Stakeholder Engagement website ties into the strategy laid out in this document, of offering relevant stakeholders the opportunity to benefit from a more tailored approach to receive project information directly targeted at them.

8. Ethical Aspects

The Europe-LAND Stakeholder Engagement Strategy represents a comprehensive and strategic approach to engaging diverse stakeholders in sustainable land use. Through a well-structured combination of participatory actions, the project ensures the effective dissemination of information and knowledge, facilitating a dynamic exchange of ideas and expertise among various groups, ranging from academia and industry to policymakers and community organizations, while maintaining an ethical stance on the following aspects.

1. Inclusivity and Diversity

The project's approach to stakeholder engagement is inclusive, ensuring a wide range of perspectives and experiences are considered. This diversity enriches the dialogue and outcomes and ensures the project's impacts are broadly relevant and applicable.

2. Transparency and Open Communication



By maintaining open communication channels and providing clear, accessible information, the project upholds the principles of transparency. This approach builds trust among stakeholders and encourages active participation and collaboration.

3. Data Privacy and Consent

The project's commitment to data privacy, as evidenced by the handling of personal information and the requirement of a confidentiality agreement for data processing, respects the privacy and autonomy of all stakeholders. Obtaining consent for communication and engagement further reinforces this ethical stance. Furthermore, a data management plan is in place to assure the way that data about stakeholders are going to be managed (see D1.5 Data Management Plan and updates D1.6, D1.7).

4. Equitable Participation and Empowerment

The project's various participatory actions, such as expert webinars, policy dialogues, and continuous project exchanges, are designed to empower stakeholders. This open access approach facilitates knowledge building and sharing and ensures that different groups have equitable opportunities to contribute to and benefit from the project.

5. Responsiveness to Stakeholder Needs

The strategy's design to categorize stakeholders by information needs, field of expertise, and geographical location demonstrates a commitment to addressing and aligning with different groups' specific knowledge demands and research/business contexts. This responsiveness is key to meaningful, effective, and long-lasting engagement.

The adherence to these principles is ensured and monitored through the processes laid out in the project's dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (see D1.8).

