Deliverable 7.2

Communication Plan and tools

1 July 2021

Preliminary results

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Deliverable 7.2	Communication Plan
Related Work Package	7
Deliverable lead	REVOLVE
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Grant Agreement Number	862993
Instrument	Horizon 2020 Framework Programme
Start date	1st November 2020
Duration	48 months
Type of Delivery (R, DEM, DEC, Other)[1]	DEC
Dissemination Level (PU, CO, CI)[2]	CO
Date last update	
Website	agromixproject.eu

[1] **R**=Document, report; **DEM**=Demonstrator, pilot, prototype; **DEC**=website, patent fillings, videos, etc.; **OTHER**=other

[2] **PU**=Public, **CO**=Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services), **CI**=Classified

Revision no	Date	Description	Author(s)
0.1	15/06/2021	First draft	Patricia Carbonell Rodriguez (REVOLVE)
0.2	25/06/2021	Comments and suggestions from co-authors	Josep Crous-Duran (REVOLVE) Lara Barange (REVOLVE)
0.3	01/07/2021	Final edits	Patricia Carbonell Rodriguez (REVOLVE)
0.4	25/06/2021	English proofreading	Lara Barange (REVOLVE)
0.5	02/07/2021	First project review	Sara Burbi (CU)

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1. **Introduction**

The purpose of this communication plan is to give guidance in how to deploy the action plan to achieve the project's main objectives, and the more specific dissemination goals to be reached with the project partners. The action plan will be based on a solid **quadruple-helix stakeholder analysis including academia/research, policy/government, industry/business, and society** (which for the purposes of more precise segmentation focuses on local associations and media). The stakeholder groups will be engaged in regular webinars and activities (when possible); the lists will be centralised via the quarterly newsletter, and will be updated regularly.

The tactics employed in this plan revolve around using and tapping into different communication tools, channels, events, activities and partnerships to achieve key results. For example, media partnerships will be a key component, as well as translating the messaging into the relevant languages to reach a broader audience. REVOLVE will use Meltwater software to track media outreach. The AGROMIX Communication Plan has been developed during the COVID-19 pandemic and given the current circumstances the planned in-person activities will be differed until further notice. In the meantime, full consortium efforts will be made to come together through digital and virtual means. Contingency plans are in place for using webinars and other online platforms for engaging our stakeholders more effectively.

2. **Objectives** Preliminary results

The objective of the AGROMIX Communication Plan is to increase the project's impact and disseminate its outcomes to the right stakeholders through external communication, and to raise awareness about the value of mixed farming and agroforestry.

The Plan provides a clear overview of how all the communication channels, activities, and tools work together to address the project's stakeholder groups. For the strategy to achieve the goals set out, it will need the full cooperation of the coordinator and work package leaders, as well as all project partners' direct involvement and support.

To evaluate the efficiency of the communication and dissemination activities, several goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been defined. KPIs are the metrics that give a clear and objective analysis of the results of the activities. Those metrics contribute to achieving the goals set up by the strategy. The communication and dissemination strategy aims to:

- Raise awareness about and promote AGROMIX in coherence with the needs of the lead and end-users,
- Reach out to and engage the target audiences,
- Support project partners in communicating and disseminating their work,
- Provide communication tools and a platform for effective dissemination and engagement in the long term,

- Establish and maintain dialogue with and between relevant stakeholders, and
- Get relevant participants to the events.

3. **Stakeholder groups**

The AGROMIX communication team follows the Stakeholder Engagement Standard 2015 developed by AccountAbility. This method considers that stakeholders are not just members of communities or non-governmental organisations, but are also individuals and groups of individuals that affect and/or could be affected by the project's activities. To achieve the project's objectives, rather than just informing target audiences of the project's activities, this communication strategy will meaningfully engage stakeholders. In most cases, the activities suggested by this plan combine both strategies.

During the AGROMIX kick-off meeting, the Communication Lead Partner (REVOLVE) created and facilitated a group exercise with the 28 partner representatives from all project work packages with the aim of providing: 1) a detailed stakeholder identification and mapping and 2) a simultaneous identification and definition of the most appropriate communication channels and activities (eg. events and publications). 46 representatives participated in the collaborative exercise grouped into three working groups: WP1 and WP3 (A); WP2 and WP4 (B); WP5 and WP6 (C). REVOLVE have used the results from this group exercise as key elements of the Communication Plan, acting as the baseline to develop reasonable indicators and realistic metric targets.

To ensure successful engagement, it is important to understand the stakeholders and their posture for change through a Stakeholder Analysis. In this regard, the interest/influence matrix helped to classify project stakeholders by their interest (support and understanding) and influence (power and ability to persuade), helping to identifying the stakeholder groups that participants considered to have high levels of both interest and influence.

Figure 1: Stakeholder groups

During this exercise, most of the stakeholders identified show a certain level of interest and influence as they are located in the up-right quadrant (see figure 1 A, B and C). These stakeholders represent the groups that can be significantly impacted by change and are most willing to act accordingly and therefore become key stakeholders to be engaged, as well as to consider their needs and forecast their market trends. This Communication Plan ensures that these key stakeholders understand the importance of the project and will give them a sense of ownership of the outcomes. These clusters or target groups were defined according to the quadruple-helix model which include: **End-users**: Farmers, land managers, farmers associations; **Policymakers**, regulators, legal entities, governments, EU; **Scientific community**: academia, research organisations; European citizens, consumers; **Civil society**: environmental associations.
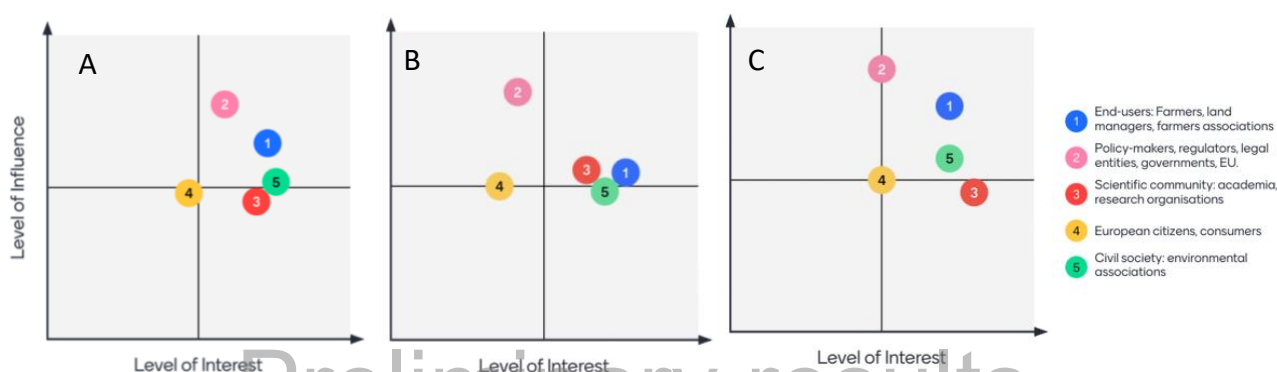

Figure 2: Results from the influence and interest group matrix for the AGROMIX project from WP1 and WP3 (A), WP2 and WP4 (B) and WP5 and WP6 (C).

From the grids above and subsequent online discussion, the priority stakeholders to engage most thoroughly identified were policymakers, followed by end-users, civil society, and the scientific community.

4. **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, the following actions are planned (Table 1). While these cover a wide array of communication activities, the consortium will need to further discuss key messaging and framing of the project, and this strategy document will be updated midway through the project to reflect these discussions, and any updated activities.

Table 1. Expected delivery time and of AGROMIX communication activities and outputs

Communication activity	Planned delivery date	Quantity/regularity
AGROMIX leaflet	M6	1
AGROMIX visual identity	M6	1
Project website and updates	M6	Quarterly update
Social media content updates (Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn)	M1	weekly

Press releases	Based on milestones	3
E-newsletters	M4, M8, M12, M16, etc..	Quarterly
Video material: **intro video to AGROMIX (1)** **video interviews (10)** **workshops summary videos (4),** **field visits (2)** **additional infographics (10).**	M6 and every 6 months	10
Communication kit and guidelines	M10	2
Poster and rollups	M8	>=5

i. Website

The website **www.agromixproject.eu** is the project's main digital tool; therefore, analysing the web traffic and the user journey is important to ensure efficient dissemination of project outcomes and findings. The website will archive all the project's outputs: public deliverables, description of the work, information about the consortium, newsletters and press releases, visual material, and regular updates on the status of the project. The objectives and the performance indicators are presented in table 2.

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Table 2. Objectives and KPIs related to the project website

	Objectives	KPI	Target September 2022
Reach	To increase reach and to lead people to read content	Number of users	1,000 visits
	To reduce the number of users that leave the website	Bounce rate (average 25%-65%)	65%
	To increase the number of loyal users for content	Number of returning visitors	15%
	To set focus on countries	Number of countries	Europe
Engage	Get quality and interest	Number of pages /session	2
	To increase, shows the content quality and interest	Session duration	>01:00
	To increase and to get people to contact/subscribe	Click-Through Rate	2%
	To value the visibility and website performance	Average position on Google search	10
Convert	Add a subscription to the newsletter	Number of subscribers to the newsletter	100
	To encourage registration to events	Number of registrations	200

ii.   Social media

Engagement on the project's social media channels contributes to disseminate the project and to understand the project's audience. The goal of the AGROMIX social media channels is to attract the follower audience to the project website and then to the data management tool (Table 3).

Table 3. Objectives and KPIs associated to the AGROMIX social media channels

	Objectives	KPI	Twitter (Oct22)	LinkedIn (Oct22)	Instagram
Reach	To increase the visibility of the page	**Number of followers**	**700**	500	
	To increase post quality	Engagement rate	/	<2%	
	To increase visibility	**Tweet impressions**	**15 000**	/	
		Page visits	250	80	
Engage	To attract quality followers	**Click rate**	**/**	<2%	
	To increase awareness of the project	Number of shares/retweets	5	8	
Convert	To increase the website traffic	**Number of users from social media to the website**	**15**	10	

iii.   Newsletters

Each quarter, the AGROMIX communications team will send a newsletter informing its subscribers about the project's progress, upcoming events, and promoting project publications. The objectives and KPIs of the newsletter are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4. Objectives and KPIs related to the AGROMIX newsletter

	Objectives	KPI	Target (Oct22)
Reach	To increase the community	Number of subscribers	500
		Open rate	50%
	To keep subscribers in the community	Bounce rate	2%
Engage	To increase awareness of the project	Click rate	18%

Convert	To get registration to events	Number of registrations	70

iv. Press releases

Three press releases will be sent to communicate about the project and different steps at key moments in the project.

Table 5. Objectives and KPIs of the press releases

	Objectives	KPI	Target (Oct22)
Reach	To reach specialised press	Number of journalists in the list	150
		Number of answers/interests shown	10
Engage	To increase project awareness	Number of journalists present at the events	5
Convert	To get published	Number of articles published	3

5. Messaging

Communication about the project will vary according to the target audience. For example, the messaging wouldn't be the same when talking to a journalist, a farmer, or a policymaker.

i. Golden Paragraph

The project's 'golden paragraph' is the most generic message that communicates the core purpose of the project. This paragraph should be used in all generic communications, and to maintain consistency it should not be modified. It is as follows:

Coordinated by Coventry University, AGROMIX brings together researchers, farmers and policymakers to explore the transition towards resilient farming, efficient land use, and sustainable agricultural value chains in Europe. Funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, this four-year

project brings together 28 partners from 14 countries (10 universities, 11 multi-actor partners, and seven research institutes), using multi-actor co-design methods to promote and implement agroforestry and mixed farming methods through 12 pilot sites and six long-term trial sites across the region. AGROMIX uses its field experience to develop knowledge platforms, interactive material such as augmented reality and mobile applications, economic models, and policy recommendations to integrate agroecology into current land management frameworks.

ii.   Sub-messaging for different target groups may include:

General public:
1. Roughly 20% of greenhouse gas emissions come from agriculture, and if we are to reach the target of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C – as set in the 2015 Paris Agreement – reducing the environmental impact of agriculture must be a priority. Upscaling agroforestry and mixed farming could support these efforts, as trees sequester carbon, regenerate and protect soil, support biodiversity, and more.
2. After decades of unprecedented progress in reducing hunger rates during the 20th century (from roughly 50% of the global population in 1945 to 11% in 2018), over the past 5 years global food security has begun to rise once again. If managed properly, agroforestry can be more productive than conventional agriculture practices, increasing food yield.
3. AGROMIX's unique feature is its use of innovative approaches and co-design processes. Instead of prescribing solutions, AGROMIX will work together with farmers to co-design transition models. AGROMIX will also use innovative activities such as serious games to interact with stakeholders in an engaging way.
4. AGROMIX's outputs will provide insights for a variety of audiences: accessible guidelines for farmers, empirical research for academia, and recommendations for policymakers.

Farmers/land managers:
1. AGROMIX offers tools to land managers to transition to and optimise their agroforestry and mixed farming systems. On our Knowledge Exchange Hubs, you can find guidelines, regional case studies, and support materials.
2. AGROMIX is working with 12 pilot sites across Europe, gathering the experience from a variety of farmers and land managers. If you're interested in following and learning from their stories, sign up to our newsletter and social media!
3. Are you interested in sharing your story and experience with AGROMIX's team? If so, get in touch by contacting **info@agromixproject.eu**.

Public authorities/policymakers
1. While the Farm to Fork strategy and 2020 CAP reform recognise agroforestry, there is very little support in place for farmers, or funding opportunities for them to transition to these systems, which may help us reach our climate change commitments. How can we support land users?
2. AGROMIX's participatory co-design approach actively involves farmers and land managers in its research. How can we engage these key stakeholders more directly?
3. AGROMIX generates policy recommendations and economic models to support new frameworks that support these systems. How can these support your work?

6. Channels

To get the messaging out to the right people (targets) in the stakeholder and their cluster groups, it's important to get the correct channels in place. The AGROMIX Communication Plan includes both external and internal channels to reach and engage the respective audiences.

i. External Channels

Starting with the tools and platforms used to communicate and disseminate the AGROMIX project, the WP7 team will develop and manage the following:

Website

The website is based on WordPress and is designed, coded, developed, and managed by REVOLVE. The AGROMIX website provides access to information, data and materials about the project, its partners, its pilot projects and events, and other activities organised for the project and/or from the project partners.

The website is built with a responsive web design that is suitable for different browsers and screen sizes, displaying a different and optimised interface depending on what device is used to access the site. The template is designed in a horizontal structure using the AGROMIX visual identity, integrating a menu, horizontal sliders, static banners (i.e. dedicated newsletter subscription), vertical thematic blocks and a footer containing the required disclaimer and the contact info where the audience can easily contact via e-mail or social networks. The domain name is agromixproject.eu, and it will be maintained for five years.

Currently, the website has seven main sections: 1. Home, 2. About, 3. In the Field, 4. Project 5. News 6. Events, 6. Contact. The homepage offers an overview of the project, presenting the project's most important messages in a simple, catchy and clear way, with links to other sections for further information.

The website will be developed over time with pages dedicated to the partners, the 12 pilot sites, resources, and the Knowledge Exchange Hubs – the latter will appear on the homepage to direct users to the repository of agroforestry information, events and relevant materials. Additional functionalities will be added to the website according to the respective project deliverables and milestones. A review of the website architecture will take place midway through the project (M24) to ensure that the site is complementary to the Knowledge Exchange Hubs (WP7), AGROMIX Toolkit, and the Serious Game.

Social Media

AGROMIX uses **Twitter**, **LinkedIn** and **Instagram** to build its community of followers and professionals. Partners are encouraged to engage with these channels and invite their colleagues to follow, like, share, and comment.
Twitter: The purpose of the Twitter account is to regularly engage with EU institutions, universities, researchers and research centres, as well as policymakers at all scales.
LinkedIn: Like Twitter, LinkedIn will target this professional audience, with a focus on disseminating AGROMIX research to the relevant stakeholders.

Instagram: Instagram on the other hand will target a totally different audience. Through this channel AGROMIX aims to engage with farmers, farmers' cooperatives, NGOs, activists, taking a more bottom-up approach.
YouTube: The project's YouTube channel will store the project's videos and link them to the project website.
Flickr: **https://www.flickr.com/people/agromixproject/**

Newsletter

AGROMIX has an EU GDPR-compliant Mailchimp account, which will be used to send out quarterly newsletters to subscribers. The newsletter sign-up form has been integrated into the website, and will be promoted through social media. The website sign-up form includes a terms & conditions section, where users can access the AGROMIX privacy policy to understand how their data and information will be used. The first AGROMIX external newsletter was sent out in May 2021, and all newsletters aim to be informative, inspiring and 'shareable'. It includes AGROMIX highlights from the pilot/trial sites when available, and suggestions for inspiring documentaries, books, articles, and podcasts. The newsletter showcases recent and current activities, and announces upcoming events. The first newsletter can be found **here**.

Videos

This communication strategy emphasises strong visuals that can lead to educational video-documentary style about the concept and added value of the AGROMIX project, as well as a video series with project partners and interviews with external experts in mixed farming and agroforestry. The plan includes an initial 10 videos, coinciding - when possible - with external events such as EURAF 2022 or Landscapes 2021. This kind of synergy is a great three-way promotion for the project, the event, and the partner. In parallel, the AGROMIX logo has been brought to life and animated into a motion design that will be included in every intro. All AGROMIX videos will be accessible on the AGROMIX YouTube channel, and will be promoted on the website, the newsletter and social media. The first AGROMIX video can be found **here**.

Events and conferences

Events are an important part of AGROMIX's dissemination efforts, as this enables the project to showcase the results, experiences and best practices generated by the project. The project aims to regularly participate in high-level European and local events to demonstrate the success stories from the pilot projects and to contribute to dialogues on mixed farming and agroforestry.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, events have been organised online for most of 2020 and the first half of 2021. Some international and European events have also been cancelled or postponed due to the global health situation, which has impacted the project's planned activities.

We have created a **form in the Events section of the website** for partners to inform us of events they will attend, as well as to share any news, pictures, or publications they wish to be shared through the website and social media.

Within the six countries of WP3 with replicated trial sites, REVOLVE will support at least one open day per trial season. To support all the events and their wider impact, the communication team will carry out

interviews and create videos. REVOLVE will also coordinate the communication packs and assist with the travel logistics of the invited stakeholders for the codesign pilots, network meetings, respective field trips and policy workshops.

In addition to the above, international webinars will be organised on a regular basis (four times during project, in M12, 18, 30, 42) to allow wider dissemination of the AGROMIX success stories among stakeholders, and will remain available in the Knowledge Exchange Hubs as capacity-building materials. In the second half of 2021, the communications team will organise a webinar creating a space for farmers and other stakeholders to connect and share stories around mixed farming and agroforestry, including value chain innovations.

ii. Internal Channels

Successful external communication and dissemination activities require strong internal communication.

Quarterly Comms Call

WP7 has identified one focal point per partner that helps coordinate all communication-related requests and activities of the AGROMIX project. These focal points are part of the Comms Team that has a dedicated WP7 group on Microsoft Teams for responsive chat questions and bi-monthly calls. Other bilateral calls may take place with the coordinator or a given partner for their video or other content-related assignments. The bi-monthly call is meant to give regular group updates and encourage active participation from the WP7 partners to design activities, provide helpful materials, and share communication references. The online internal communication platform also decreases and limits the use of emails, saving time and energy. The WP7 group includes a 'Files' section that serves as the Communication Kit repository for all comms guidelines and materials for partners to access easily. During these call short trainings are given on how to use the project social media channels, Trello boards, or other platforms aiming to increase the project's visibility.

Webinars

Accelerated by the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the shift to the digital world is unprecedented. Taking this into consideration, the communications team will engage and support all work packages to find easy solutions to connecting the content and people that drive the AGROMIX project.

In June 2021 the communications team supported the organisation of the 1st joint event of the three research projects funded under the EU Horizon 2020 call on climate-smart and resilient farming (LC-SFS-19-2018-2019): AGROMIX, MIXED and STARGATE. The webinars act as a special series to give presentations, spark debate and enhance discussions, and complement live in-person events when the circumstances permit. Events will become increasingly hybrid in nature to combine digital and in-person activities.

This communication strategy will keep this in mind and use audience engagement software tools such as Mentimeter, Quizizz, Survey Monkey and other 'fun' and more serious platforms to inform and engage viewers and participants of the AGROMIX project.

7. Media Relations

This task falls under the WP7 Task 7.5: Project dissemination and exploitation. REVOVLVE will engage with journalists and relevant environmental platforms and ensure media coverage of the project through its social media content, news, and press releases. Exchange with media outlets will be developed, starting with media focused on sustainable organic and conventional agriculture, climate mitigation and sustainable land-management with outlets such as EU Observer, Europe's World, EurActiv, REVOLVE magazine, farming press. The first article published in April by REVOLVE magazine can be read **here**.

8. Impact Reporting

Impact is measured both qualitatively and quantitatively. The suggested structure of the AGROMIX impact report is the following:

Contents:

- Overview/"At a glance"
- Social Media: Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram (KPIs and growth rate/month)
- Newsletter: Subscriber growth and geographical outreach
- Website: Traffic, downloads, outreach
- In the press and Media relations
- Workshops: digital media highlight overview
- External events: digital media highlights overview

REVOLVE leads the design and layout of the report which can be found in WP7 Teams General.

The quantitative date is collected via a Google data studio dashboard created by the communications team, which is monitored continually. The dashboard can be found **here**.