



WP 9

Deliverable 9.1

D9.1: Dissemination plan (revised each year)

Marine Ecosystem Restoration in Changing European Seas

MERCES

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COORDINATOR: UNIVPM

LEAD BENEFICIARY: 19 - ECOREACH

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DISSEMINATION LEVEL (e.g. Public)

PU	Public	X
CO	CO Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

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1. Executive Summary

This document is the **Dissemination plan and Quality Control (DP)** of the MERCES project elaborated by ECOREACH, leader of Work Package 9 (Dissemination, communication and public engagement). The DP has been compiled by ECOREACH and GAIA, in collaboration with the Management Team.

The DP has been developed with two different purposes:

- to map out the dissemination strategy and outreach efforts during the project period;
- to define the audience, the messages to be disseminated, the tools and the timeline.

The present strategy aims to provide a consistent, coordinated and strategic approach to dissemination and exploitation measures to be taken during and after the project life span, with the scope of maximising the value of the MERCES outputs.

The strategy beyond the life-span of the project is also outlined to get the most out of the project end products by looking for their transfer and dissemination.

Built in a fully participative manner, the strategy is based on feedback and ideas collected from MERCES partners (scientific coordinators, WP leaders and participants) via direct communication. The contribution of all the MERCES consortium is acknowledged and in particular the support of the partners involved in the dissemination, communication and public engagement in MERCES (WP9 partners).

Considering that the DP is not a scientific document, feedback has been incorporated and organized in a descriptive way. The DP consists of six sections, including this executive summary, and two Annexes, reporting the first version of the stakeholders map and the list of other EU projects, possibly to be involved for cross-cutting dissemination activities.

The DP is designed to identify 4 fundamental points:

- **Who to disseminate to?** In section (2) the **AUDIENCE** to whom the dissemination is aimed is described.
- **What to disseminate?** In section (3) the **MESSAGE** to disseminate is described.
- **How to disseminate?** In section (4) the **TOOLS and MECHANISMS** of dissemination are described
- **When to disseminate?** In Section (5) a **CALENDAR and PLAN** of dissemination is described.

Additionally, in the last section (6) the **ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING** of the success of the implementation of the MERCES dissemination is outlined.

Since the dissemination actions are strictly dependent upon the research activities and results during the lifespan of the project, this DP will be revised every year (months 12, 24 and 36). If necessary, this DP will be amended and its goals re-defined, depending on the findings of the project.

2. The Audience: Who to disseminate to?

This section describes who is to be the audience receiving the information to be disseminated.

- The **general public**: local communities around European seas facing environmental challenges, civil society, people interested in this research field, “stakeholders” through multipliers such as journalists and media, NGO’s.
- The **researcher communities** through the dissemination channels of MERCES team members and through the scientific outputs resulting from the MERCES effort through various scientific means (publications, international conference, newsletters, mailing lists, etc.).
 - **Lecturers/trainers** of basic science (environmental sciences, biology, ecology) and natural resources management related courses, vocational trainers, university lecturers. Particular attention will be dedicated to schools, through a direct engagement with teachers.
- The **natural resources management community and industries**, *e.g.*:
 - managers of nature reserves and natural resources,
 - experts working for regional/provincial administration,
 - engineering consultants,
 - policy makers,
 - mayors,
 - employees at high management level in regional or national administration, European Commission staff
 - SMEs and industrial stakeholders.

The MERCES audience will be identify following a hierarchical scheme, from the local to the EU and extra-EU spatial scale. Special emphasis has been put on outreach to the public (local communities) around the pilot areas considered in MERCES activities. In this way, the results from each WP will be much more tangible than the purely conceptual outputs of the project.

The hierarchical organization of target audience is reported below:

- **Institutional scale (within partner institution)**

Target audiences: other researchers, administrative staff.

Rationale: partners inform the other members of their institution to anchor the project in the institution and to stimulate interest in the project. Interested members of the institution may wish to make a contribution to the project and participate in project activities. They may also be interested in the findings of the project. Furthermore, administrative staff need to be kept informed of the progress of the project and reporting obligations.

Languages: Project participant languages (EN, all partners languages)

- **Local scale (local communities)**

Target audiences: other researchers, general public, relevant stakeholders, environmental managers, local policy makers.

Rationale: The local community is interested in the activities of the partners institutions. The research is supported by public funds and for this support to be justified, it is important to inform the public of on-going research activities. Furthermore, interested members of the local community may wish to make a contribution to the project and participate in project activities. They may also be interested in the findings of the project.

The MERCES framework is well anchored in institutional and local practice, since it is built on specific case studies. It provides opportunities for the further exploitation and development of the foundations laid by the MERCES project. To take full advantage of these further developments it is important to keep the MERCES community together after the formal end of the project.

Languages: project participant languages (EN, all partners languages).

- **National scale**

Target audiences: other researchers (inter- and trans-disciplinary research teams), general public, relevant stakeholders, environmental managers, decision makers, policy makers, national scientific associations and societies, national graduate and post-graduate associations, PhD and other post-graduate programs, SMEs and Industrial stakeholders through National Focal points (e.g. Chamber of Commerce), local, regional and national policy makers, NGOs.

Rationale: national funds support research activities and for this support to be justified, it is important to inform the public and research authorities of on-going research activities in national institutions. This is true both for the non-European and European countries participating.

Furthermore, interested members in different parts of the country may wish to make a contribution to the project or participate in project activities.

Languages: project participant languages (EN, all partners languages).

- **European scale**

Target audiences: other researchers, general public, relevant stakeholders, environmental managers, international scientific associations, decision makers, policy makers.

Rationale: The research results of MERCES are expected as applicable at EU seas level and to stimulate cooperation with European and non-European researchers. The activities of the project findings may be of use in different countries of the region facing similar challenges, so it is important to inform the public and research authorities of on-going research activities at international level. Furthermore, interested members of in different parts of the regional seas may wish to make a contribution to the project or participate in project activities. In particular, they may also be interested in the findings of the project.

Languages: EN

- **Global scale**

Target audiences: other researchers (e.g. members of LOICZ, Diversitas, IMBER, IGBP, IHDP), global institutions, general public, relevant stakeholders, environmental managers, decision makers, policy makers, NGOs.

Rationale: The findings of the project are a contribution to sustainable use of natural resources and therefore relevant to the global community.

Languages: EN

3. The Message: What to disseminate?

- **General information about the project.** In order to make MERCES results useful, they should be of interest and easily accessible to all possible end users. The audience needs to be informed about the project, its progress, its results, its outputs and its legacy.

- **Research findings.** MERCES produces tools, information and new knowledge that will outlast the project itself. MERCES contributes to the enhancement of academic courses and professional training in systems thinking and problem solving, in particular in natural systems.
- **Findings relevant to economic and commercial sectors.** MERCES contributes to improving available methodologies for the restoration of natural resources relevant to industrial sectors as: industries working in the field of energy, fisheries and aquaculture sectors.
- **Management relevant findings.** Transition from sustainable management to the reversal of natural degradation can only be achieved by applying ‘systems thinking’ and MERCES develops the appropriate tools to achieve this goal.
- **Policy relevant findings.** MERCES supports the implementation of existing EU Directives (HABITAT, WFD, MSFD) and good practices towards restoration of natural resources. MERCES contributes to the understanding of social interactions within natural systems and how these impact the environment and future policies.

4. The Tools and Mechanism: How to disseminate?

- **Website and project management site.** A project website (www.merces-project.eu) acts as the dissemination channel for the various communications tools developed by the project. The web site is meant to be maintained online beyond the project lifetime. A restricted area for partners in the web site and an additional project management account (gmail account) allow project partners to share documents and calendars and use e-mail alerts about new uploads and materials. An **e-newsletter** with information about latest project achievements (6 monthly). **Podcasts** and **news flashes** will also be available through the website. The website represents also a channel to engage directly industries, commercial and professional stakeholders, since a “**Business club**” has been built in the website, on the homepage. In this dedicated section (edited and updated under the responsibility of DSES and WP8’ partners), specific material (**e-newsletters, presentations, material for webinar**) will be available and continuously updated.
- **Internal map.** The institutional websites, mailing lists and institutional/personal social networks accounts of participants have been firstly mapped, with the voluntary participation of the researchers from all the institutes involved in the project. This allowed quantifying and identifying the already available network to be used for divulgation and make it as wide as possible.

- **Promotional material.** Leaflets, posters, audio, video and fact sheets will be available in the web site in a printable version, both on the restricted and public areas. **Podcasting** is the production and provision of media data (**audio** or **video**) through the internet. The video files can be viewed online and partners can download them with their browser as normal video/audio files. It is a new dissemination tool reaching out to a younger audience of professionals and those who prefer verbal information. These files will give a quick snapshot of ongoing activities and specific partner experiences. Video/audio-podcasts will be produced and made available through the MERCES website.
- **Social Media.** Creation of accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Researchgate. Creation of a Youtube Channel. All these channels will be linked within the web site.
- **Media events.** Press briefings, press releases, EU-wide media activities, making best use of EU-wide events such as Euronews, global media activities, making use of global wide events.
- **Scientific dissemination.** Oral and poster presentations, workshops, seminars, training courses, conferences. All partners will be encouraged to identify national and international expert events and sharing them in the MERCES calendar. Such events provide good opportunities for distributing leaflets or simply networking among participants and giving information about MERCES objectives, activities and results. Presentations at major expert events will be used to disseminate MERCES results by giving poster or power point presentations.
- **Workshops and webinar with stakeholders.** Workshops (also as webinars) with industries and stakeholders from the “Business club” will facilitate the transfer of knowledge from MERCES to representatives of the innovative industry. The workshops will also promote future collaboration and elicit feedback from the industry itself, which may be incorporated in the remaining work within MERCES and beyond. A minimum of three workshops will be organized. Furthermore, an evaluation questionnaire about the workshops will be prepared and administered to participants.
- **Events for schools.** Promotion of Ocean Literacy and organization of seminars for teachers, by means of the educational material developed in WP9. Such material will be uploaded on Scientix to ensure accessibility for all. However, direct interaction with teachers will promote the adoption of such material and will facilitate feedback from the actual users. Seminars will be associated with hands-on activities for children based on part of the educational material. An evaluation questionnaire about the seminars will be prepared and administered to participants.

- **Liason with related projects to improve the temporal and topical links between EU projects.** The opportunities for achieving synergy benefits through research cooperation among EU projects (as CoCoNet, SponGES, DEVOTES, MMMPA, GreenBubbles) can be strongly increased by strengthening the links between these related projects and by explicit cross-referencing. The topics dealt with in this project will provide a ground for in-depth collaboration. The added value of these projects for MERCES is also the exchange of experience on good practices for conducting this type of projects. MERCES will also connect to future projects with the intention to further exploit and expand the MERCES outputs.
- **Scientific publications on international journals.** Open access for scientific articles is strongly recommended in order to make the scientific results of the project as wide as possible.
- **Policy briefs and community guidelines.** MERCES will produce policy briefs and community guidelines outlining the rationale for choosing a particular alternative or course of action in a current debates on natural resources restoration. The briefs will provide a targeted discussion of the current alternatives to serve as an impetus for action.
- **MERCES legacy, beyond the project lifetime.** The MERCES project will result in a series of outputs for the future ecosystem restoration science community and which should be continuously used and updated and upgraded when needed and possible. MERCES products: experiment archives, academic training courses, professional training materials. Scientific publications: special issues, conference presentations and articles in proceedings, articles in other journals (plans 2 or 3 years beyond end of the project). Academic and professional training experiences: masters, PhD, training sessions.

5. The timeline: When to disseminate?

The dissemination actions will be organized into different time phases:

- Starting phase (3-12 months). Initially, most of MERCES activities will be preparatory and focusing on setting the field work and collecting data. The different case studies will offer opportunities for collection of photo/audio/video material and communication targeting a broad audience. There will also be chances to participate in a wide range of events, including sectoral ones, and advertise about MERCES but most probably not yet to present results from the project. During this phase, also the promotional material will be elaborated.
- Intermediate phase (12-24 months). With results progressively being generated, initial dissemination will also be possible. This will be a transitional phase, where general promotion (e.g.

about the scope and approach of MERCES) will gradually be balanced with more specific communication (e.g. about contributions to conference, papers released, milestones achieved etc).

- Steady phase (24-36 months). The central phase of the project will see steadily progressing research activities (including additional field campaigns) associated with the release of reports, datasets, publications, communications during congresses etc. This will be the core base material for dissemination. There will also be a balance between general and specific communication, the latter now further extended to include also MERCES events and educational products.

- Capitalising phase (36-48 months). Approaching the end, the project will have to capitalise on its results ensuring that scientific knowledge is incorporated in policy making, innovation is taken forward to further development and awareness has been risen about MERCES topics through different layers of society. A peak in the release of reports, datasets and publication is expected for this last period. However, synthesis and communication to key audiences - possibly via direct interaction - will be essential to achieve the above. Although extending beyond the end of MERCES, this phase will formally last until month 48. The transition through phases will be a continuum, and timing will vary for the different WPs and Tasks within WPs.

6. Assessment and monitoring the success of MERCES dissemination

Tool / mechanism	Task	Time line	Description	Targets	Indicators of impact
Website and project management site	T9.2	Online at M3 and revised at least twice per month with news	Project website linked to social media and with sections dedicated to different stakeholders	At least 30K visits/year.	impact measured as views/downloads of online material (e.g. newsletters, fact sheets, see below)
Social media	T9.2	Accounts opened starting from M3	Social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and ResearchGate	FB: at least 200 likes/year; TT: at least 150 new followers/year and at least 10K impressions/month; YT: at least 100 views/video per year; RG: at least 100 followers in year 1 and 50 new followers/year from year 2, at least 25 views per paper/year	FB/TT/YT: audience drawn into visiting e-MERCES resources via links posted in social media RG: % of published papers cited over the years: y1 = 25%, Y2 = 40%, Y3 = 60%, Y4 = 70%
Newsletter	T9.2	One newsletter every 6 months	4 dedicated to specialists and 4 dedicated to non-specialists, promoted via social media	At least 150 views/newsletter	Evaluation questionnaire administered to subscribers once per year: min 50% filled in, min 75% useful/very useful
Short videos	T9.2	First short video online at M3	2-3 dedicated to kids, 2-3 for non-specialist audience, posted on YT, accessible via website and promoted via social media	At least 100 views/video per year	70% of comments pertinent to topic, positive towards project or concerned about issues
Fact sheets	T9.2	First by M6	N=3, first programmatic, second and third incorporating results, accessible via website, promoted via social media and printed for selected events	At least 200 views/factsheet (online version), printed version distributed at minimum 5 key events	at least one new relevant contact emerging from key events

Printed promotional material	T9.2	Available from M6	Part of the communication toolbox consisting of template presentation, business cards, poster, flyers	Used by 100% of partners by the end of Y1. Used in at least 10 scientific or stakeholders-relevant events/y and 5 pieces of news/y	Evaluation questionnaire administered to partners at the end of y2: min 80% filled in, min 75% good/very good
Ocean Literacy (OL) material for schools	T9.3	First set available by M24	Uploaded on Scientix and presented/tested during workshops/events, promoted via social media and local channels	At least one activity per WP2, WP3 and WP4, at least 100 classes reached	Evaluation questionnaire administered to teachers at the end of each activity: min 70% filled in, min 75% good/very good
Citizen Science (CS) activities	T9.4	Selection of CS activities by M12	Identification and tuning of at least one CS continuous activity for WP2, WP3 and WP4	At least 25 volunteers engaged per activity by the end of Y2	Evaluation questionnaire administered to volunteers at the end of their participation: min 50% filled in, min 75% good/very good
Training for specialists/institutional audience	T9.6	From second year	Min. two, for transfer of knowledge and feedback, promoted locally and internationally via partners' networks and social media.	At least 15 participants/event	Evaluation questionnaire administered to participants at the end of each event: min 70% filled in, min 75% good/very good
Educational events for non-specialist public	T9.6	From second year	Min. three, in the wider context of science festivals or similar	At least 40 participants/event	Evaluation questionnaire administered to participants at the end of each event: min 50% filled in, min 75% good/very good
Peer-reviewed publications	T9.7	From M12	Publications in ISI journals, participation to national/international congresses	About 5-10 papers/partner, min one review or position paper per WP (WP2-7)	% of published papers cited over the years: y1 = 25%, Y2 = 40%, Y3 = 60%, Y4 = 70%

Networking activities	T9.8	From M24	Coordination of participation to meetings, conferences, fairs, joint workshops, etc (with WP10), coordination of networking with policy-decision makers (with WP6, WP8)	Participation in at least 10 scientific or stakeholders-relevant events/y	
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7. Annexes

Annex I. Database of stakeholders v.1

Company/Group/Institution	Stakeholder type	Address	Web /contact person
Regional Secretariat for the Sea, Science and Technology of the Azores	Policy	Portugal	Fausto Brito e Abreu / Luís Rodrigues
Regional Directorate for sea Affairs of the Azores	Policy	Portugal	Filipe Porteiro
Federação das Pescas dos Açores	Policy	Portugal	Gualberto Rita
Member of European Parliament	Policy	EU	Ricardo Serrão Santos
MATTM - Sottosegretariato all' Ambiente	Policy	Italy	Silvia Velo
ISA - International Seabed Authority - Office of Resources and Environmental Monitoring (OREM) - https://www.isa.org.jm/authority/office-resources-and-environmental-monitoring	Policy	Jamaica	
DSCC - Deep-Sea Conservation Coalition	Policy and Natural resources managment	Netherlands	
CBD - Convention on Biological Diversity	Policy and Natural resources managment	Canada	
OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic - http://www.ospar.org/	Policy and Natural resources managment	UK	
HELCOM - Baltic Marine Environmental Protection Commission - http://www.helcom.fi/	Policy and Natural resources managment	Finland	
Ministero dell' Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare (MATTM) - Direzione Generale per la Protezione della Natura e del Mare (PNM)	Policy and Natural resources managment	Italy	Maria Carmela Giarratano
European Sea Ports Organisation ESPO	Port Authority	Belgium	http://www.espo.be/

Port of Rotterdam	Port Authority	The Netherlands	https://www.portofrotterdam.com/
Lisbon port	Port Authority	Portugal	http://www.portodelisboa.pt/portal/page/portal/PORTAL_PORTO_LISBOA_ING
Thessaloniki Port Authority	Port Authority	Greece	https://www.thpa.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=featured&Itemid=979&lang=en
Ytre Hvaler National Park	National park	Norway	http://www.ytrehvaler.no/
Porto Cesareo Marine Protected Area	Natural resources managment	Italy	Paolo D'ambrosio
Tavolara Marine Protected Area	Natural resources managment	Italy	Augusto Navone
Parco Conero	Natural resources managment	Italy	Lanfranco Giacchetti
Punta Campanella Marine Protected Area	Natural resources managment	Italy	Miccio Antonino
Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)	Natural resources managment and research	Italy	Leonardo Tunesi, Cecilia Silvestri
Environmental Resources Management ERM	Environmental Survey	UK	http://www.erm.com/
G-tec	Environmental Survey	Belgium	http://www.g-tec.eu/en
AquaBioTechGroup	Environmental Survey	Malta	https://www.aquabt.com/
Nautilus Minerals Inc	Deep-Sea Mining	Canada	http://www.nautilusminerals.com/IRM/content/default.aspx
Atkins Global	Coastal engineering	UK	http://www.atkinsglobal.com/en-GB
Tobin Consulting Engineers	Coastal engineering	Galway	http://www.tobinconsultingengineers.com/
Sweco Environmental AB	Coastal engineering	Sweden	http://www.sweco.se/en/
Coastal Care Aps	Coastal engineering	Denmark	http://coastcare.com/index.htm
Coastal Oceanography INNOVA	Coastal engineering	Spain	https://www.environmental-expert.com/companies/coastal-oceanography-innova-sl-40699
Dupont Sustainable Solutions	Coastal engineering	The Netherlands	http://www.dupont.com/products-and-services/consulting-services-process-technologies/brands/sustainable-solutions.html
PROWA Engineering gmbh	Coastal engineering	Germany	http://www.prowa.net/english/index.html
Waterfron Engineering	Coastal engineering	UK	http://www.myseawall.com/

4H-JENA Engineering	Coastal engineering	Germany	http://www.4h-jena.de/
Economics for the Environment EFTEC	Coastal engineering	UK	http://www.eftec.co.uk/
International Marine and Dredging Consultants	Coastal engineering	Belgium	http://www.imdc.be/
Fugro EMU Ltd	Coastal engineering	UK	http://www.fugroemu.com/
ENI - Technology Scenario and R&D planning	Offshore oil and gas	Italy	Roberto Cimino
BP	Offshore oil and gas	UK	http://www.bp.com/en_gb/united-kingdom.html
Shell	Offshore oil and gas	The Netherlands	http://www.shell.com/
Statoil	Offshore oil and gas	Norway	http://www.statoil.com/en/Pages/default.aspx
British Marine Aggregate Producers Association	Aggregate mining	UK	http://www.bmapa.org/
Group de Cloedt	Aggregate mining	Denmark	http://www.groupdecloedt.be/en/Denmark
Aqua Trade	Mariculture	Greece	http://www.aquatrade.gr/
CEFAS	Mariculture	UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/centre-for-environment-fisheries-and-aquaculture-science
Marine Harvets ASA	Mariculture	Norway	http://www.marineharvest.com/
Scottish Sea Farms	Mariculture	UK	http://www.scottishseafarms.com/
Suomen Hyotytuuli	Offshore Wind	Finland	http://hyotytuuli.fi/
Vattenfall	Offshore Wind	Sweden	https://corporate.vattenfall.com/
Energinet.dk	Offshore Wind	Denmark	http://energinet.dk/EN/Sider/default.aspx
Porto de Abrigo Fishermen Association	Industry	Portugal	Liberato Fernandes
APEDA Fishermen Association	Industry	Portugal	Jorge Gonçalves
OMA Observatório do Mar dos Açores	NGO	Portugal	Carla Dãmaso / Rogério Feio
Sciaena/PONG-Pesca	NGO	Portugal	Gonçalo Carvalho
Deep-sea conservation coalition	NGO	EU	Matthew Gianni
PEW Brussels offices	NGO	EU	

EMSEA - European Marine Science Educators Association - http://www.emsea.eu/	Non-profit organization	Belgium	
Università degli Studi di Cagliari - Dipartimento di Scienze della Vita e dell'Ambiente	Academia	Italy	Gianluigi Bacchetta
Università di Napoli Parthenope - Dipartimento di Scienze per l'Ambiente	Academia	Italy	Giovanni Russo
CIESM - Mediterranean Science Commission	Scientific	Monaco	Yves Henocque (Marine Policy), Laura Giuliano (Biotech)
Society for Ecological Restoration International	Scientific	International	James Aronson
IPBES - Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services - http://www.ipbes.net/	Scientific and Policy	Germany	
Oceana	Scientific organisations and NGOs	USA	

Annex II. Database of projects for cross-cutting activities v.1

Project	Website	Coordinator/Responsible
Green Bubbles	http://www.greenbubbles.eu	Università Politecnica delle Marche - Italy
COLUMBUS	http://columbusproject.eu	Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) - Ireland
EUROMARINE	http://www.euromarinenetwork.eu	Soton -NOCS (chair of Steering commetee)- UK
The Ocean Project	http://theoceanproject.org/	Bill Mott (Director) - USA
SponGES	http://www.deepseasponges.org	University of Bergen (UiB) - Norway
AtlantOS	https://www.atlantos-h2020.eu/	GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel - Germany
Atlas	http://www.eu-atlas.org/	Heriot Watt University - UK
DEVOTES	http://www.devotes-project.eu/	AZTI - Spain
MMMPA	http://www.mmmpa.eu/	Università Politecnica delle Marche - Italy
COCONET	http://www.coconet-fp7.eu/	Consorzio Nazionale Interuniversitario per le Scienze del Mare (CoNISMa) - Italy