Deliverable D6.3 – DEC and Capacity Building Plan and Report, v2

M18/FEB 2025

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In this document, the acronym 'DOMG – VL O' is used to refer to the Department of the Environment and Spatial Development, Flanders, Belgium, as per the partner's request for clarification. It's noted that in the grant agreement, the partner is identified by the acronym VL O (Vlaamse Gewest).

List of Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
DEC	Dissemination, Exploitation, Communication
JRC	Joint Research Center
EUSO	EU Soil Observatory
ESP	European Soil Partnership
REA	European Research Executive Agency
SMIP	The Soil Mission Implementation Plan
SWR	SoilWise Repository
R&I	Research and Innovation
CA	Consortium Agreement
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
BIOS	BIOSENSE INSTITUTE
EV ILVO	EIGEN VERMOGEN VAN HET INSTITUUT VOOR LANDBOUW- EN VISSERIJONDERZOEK
ISRIC	STICHTING INTERNATIONAL SOIL REFERENCE AND INFORMATION CENTRE
WU	WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY
MU	MASARYKOVA UNIVERZITA
WR	STICHTING WAGENINGEN RESEARCH
ZALF	LEIBNIZ-ZENTRUM FUER AGRARLANDSCHAFTSFORSCHUNG

CREA	CONSIGLIO PER LA RICERCA IN AGRICOLTURA E L'ANALISI DELL'ECONOMIA AGRARIA
VLO	VLAAMSE GEWEST
INRAE	INSTITUT NATIONAL DE RECHERCHE POUR L'AGRICULTURE, L'ALIMENTATION ET L'ENVIRONNEMENT
CIRAD	CENTRE DE COOPERATION INTERNATIONALE EN RECHERCHE AGRONOMIQUE POUR LEDEVELOPPEMENT
WE	WETRANSFORM GMBH
GAIA	GAIA EPICHEIREIN ANONYMI ETAIREIA PSIFIAKON YPIRESION
NP	NEUROPUBLIC AE PLIROFORIKIS & EPIKOINONION
ELO	EUROPEAN LANDOWNERS' ORGANIZATION
KER	Key Exploitable results
D&C	Dissemination and communication
UC	User Case

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Executive Summary

The SoilWise project, under the Horizon Innovation Actions, aims to develop an open-access soil knowledge and data repository to support users in safeguarding soil across Europe. With 60-70% of European soil currently considered unhealthy, i.e. are losing their capacity to support food production, biodiversity and the regulation of water, nutrient and carbon cycles. The project addresses the urgent need for reliable and harmonized data to support informed decision-making at various levels, aligning with the EU Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe' and other related strategies. SoilWise, spanning 48 months and involving 15 partners, is designed to create a scalable, modular repository that leverages AI and ML technologies to make soil data Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (FAIR).

The SoilWise project spans 48 months, during which three key deliverables will be developed in the framework of WP6 - one of which, Deliverable 6.2 - DEC and Capacity Building Plan and Report, v1 was completed in month three. Deliverable 6.3 - DEC and Capacity Building Plan and Report, v2 (M18) reports on the DEC and Capacity Building activities of the first 18 months, with an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned. It provides a detailed report on DEC and Capacity Building activities, analyzing strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned. Additionally, it offers an overview of all DEC-related efforts, communication tools, dissemination channels, and stakeholder engagement initiatives.

Serving as a comprehensive guide, this deliverable ensures that project findings, tools, and outcomes are effectively shared with key stakeholders, maximizing impact and fostering long-term engagement. The SoilWise DEC and Capacity Plan and Report also acts as a practical resource for consortium partners, outlining internal and external communication strategies throughout the project's duration to support its sustainability.

BioSense Institute (BIOS) leads the DEC strategy with the support of all project partners. The communication and dissemination activities in the project enable partners to interact with stakeholders via online and offline channels (website, social media, newsletter, training activites, workshops, events, etc); to disseminate project results and outputs to target audiences; and to maximize the visibility of the Soil Mission and Soil Wise Repository (SWR) among all target groups.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Summary

Now more than ever, soil health is an issue that needs to be addressed urgently, as recent assessments state that 60-70% of European soils can be considered unhealthy (Bouman, 2022). The EU Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe', the EU Soil Strategy and the proposal for a Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive (5 July 2023) aim to have 75% of EU soils healthy or significantly improved by 2030 and all soils healthy by 2050. Reaching such an ambition requires, among others, access to reliable, harmonised existing and new data and knowledge collected at local, national and EU levels to allow informed decision-making at all scales to support the proposed Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive and the EU Soil Strategy.

The SoilWise project will provide an integrated and actionable access point to scattered and heterogeneous soil data and knowledge in Europe, making them FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) and improving trust, willingness, and the ability to share and re-use soil data and knowledge. In three project development cycles, co-creation and co-validation by multi-stakeholder groups are at the centre of project activities.

SoilWise recognizes the workflows and repositories that users already rely on and aims to make their lives easier by enhancing these processes through the software platform being developed within the project, improving discoverability, usability, and connectivity.. An open, modular, scalable, and extensible knowledge and data repository building on existing and new technologies will be provided while respecting data ownership, access policies and privacy. AI- and ML- techniques will be employed to interlink scattered data and knowledge, automate the processes, infer new knowledge and increase FAIRness. SoilWise applies infrastructure thinking instead of project thinking to design a repository that will be operational for at least a decade to support EUSO evolvement accordingly. The SoilWise repository and community are designed to be a joint starting point and common ground for countries, the European Commission, and other stakeholders to jointly guide soil and related spatial policy and informed decision-making towards the 2030 goals of the Green Deal, achieve healthy soils in 2050 and ensure broad uptake and implementation by land managers, policy, research, and industry.

All personal data acquired through SoilWise is processed in strict accordance with the relevant EU privacy regulations, underscoring our unwavering commitment to upholding the highest standards of data privacy and security for our users. This dedication is a cornerstone of our project.

1.2 Document Scope

The deliverable 6.3 DEC and Capacity Building Plan and Report, v2 outlines the actions, tools, and channels that are used throughout the SoilWise project scope. It represents and update of the D6.2 DEC and Capacity Building Plan and Report, v1, the Communication and Dissemination plan, comprehensive overview of Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation activities of the first eighteen months of the project. Additionally, it includes an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, and key insights gained, helping to enhance future strategies.

The DEC and Capacity Building Report for the SoilWise project covers Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation activities in the first eighteen months of the project.
Communication, with a focus on the strategic promotion of the project's results, emphasizes collaborative knowledge sharing and the co-creation of a knowledge repository for sustainable soil management. Central to this is the communication of the transformative power of shared soil data and the creation of a road map for sustainable soil data communities in Europe.

Dissemination focuses on identifying the tools, platforms, and processes for ensuring that the project's outcomes are widely accessible. This includes the use of the project's website, social media channels, newsletters, and publications. Key to this is the commitment to open access and the distribution of research findings, project updates, and relevant data in formats such as scientific papers, infographics, and press releases.

The exploitation details how SoilWise will leverage its outputs to benefit stakeholders and contribute to achieving the project's objectives. The plan also includes a commitment to transparency, with the sharing of project results under a Creative Commons License to promote widespread adoption and utilization. The exploitation plan emphasizes active engagement in conferences, workshops, and webinars to ensure that stakeholders directly benefiting from the project outputs are involved. Key partners will participate in major events such as the European Mission Soil Week, promoting collaboration and raising the profile of the SoilWise project.

1.3 Document structure

This document is comprised of the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1** provides an introduction to the project and the document,
- **Chapter 2** provides an overview of the KPIs, and activities and results outlined in the DEC and Capacity Building Report,
- **Chapter 3** provides an overview of reflections and lessons learned at this stage of the project,

1.4 Relation to other project deliverables

Deliverable D6.3 is intricately connected to several other deliverables within the SoilWise project, ensuring a cohesive approach to achieving project objectives:

- D1.1, D1.2 - Usage Scenarios, requirements, v1, v2 (M5, M36)
- D1.3, D1.4 - Repository Architecture, v1, v2 (M8, M42)
- D1.5, D1.6 - Repository GM, v1, v2 (M21, M42)
- D2.1, D2.2, D2.3, D2.4 - Developed & Integrated DM components, v1, v2, v3, v4 (M13, M18, M31, M46)
- D2.5, D2.6 – Report on strategy for FAIRness on soil data, v1, v2 (M27, M42)
- D3.1, D3.2, D3.3, D3.4, D3.4 - Developed & Integrated KM components, v1, v2, v3, v4 (M13, M18, M31, M46)
- D3.5, D3.6 – Report on strategy for effective soil KM, v1, v2 (M27, M42)
  D4.1, D4.2, D4.3, D4.4 – Repository infrastructure, components, and APIs, v1, v2, v3, v4 (M13, M18, M31, M47)
- D4.5, 4.6, 4.7 - Repository Data and Knowledge Resources, v1, v2, v3 (M21, M34, M46)
- D5.1, D5.2 - User cases guidelines and demonstration plans, v1, v2 (M12, M24)
- D5.3, D5.4, D5.5 - Deployment and Evaluation Report, v1, v2, v3 (M21, M34, M46)
- D5.6 - Deployment and Evaluation Report, v1 (M47)
- D6.1 - Project Web Site (M3)
- D6.2, D6.4 - DEC and Capacity Building Plan and Report, v1, v3 (M3, M48)
- D6.5, D6.6 - IPR, Business Model Report and Policy Brief, v1, v2 (M24, 47)
- D7.1 - Project Management handbook (M1)
- D7.2, D7.3, D7.4 - Open Science and Data Management Plan, v1, v2, v3 (M6, M27, M48)

1.5 Relation to other project tasks

This deliverable relates to the following project tasks:

- T5.1 User cases planning – will support the timely preparation of the User cases in terms of both technical and organizational issues,
- T5.2 User Cases implementation and demonstration – we will coordinate, facilitate, and monitor the demonstration activities implementation,
- T5.3 User Cases impact analysis - we will support the evaluation of the User cases,
- T5.4 Best practices and replication guidelines – we will support the analysis of the User Cases and the development a report that contains usage best practices and replication guidelines,
- T6.1 Communication and dissemination – addressed in this deliverable, as well as in the D6.1, D6.2, D6.3, D6.6,
- T6.2 Fostering network of relevant projects, initiatives, and institutions – addressed in this deliverable, as well as in the D6.1, D6.2,
- T6.3 Exploitation and capacity Building - addressed in this deliverable, as well as in the D6.1, D6.2,
- T6.4 SoilWise Business Model, IPR Management, and Policy brief – will be addressed in the D6.4 and D6.5.

2   KPI-Driven DEC and Capacity Building Plan and Report

2.1 Website

SoilWise Project Website serves as a dynamic and centralized platform that effectively communicates the mission, vision, and the value the SoilWise (SW) project brings to its audience. It acts as a digital hub for information related to SoilWise, presenting the SWR, offering user-friendly and engaging experience for visitors seeking to understand the project's work, access resources, and stay informed about its latest initiatives. The website will also be the main link with the SoilWise Repository (SWR).

Table 1 SoilWise Project Website and Expected value

Metric	Expected value
Unique website pageviews	> 10,000
Bounce rate	> 35% (Source: Google Analytics)

Table 2 SoileWise Project Website Status

Metric	Status in M18
Active users	3,929
Pageviews of the website	9,946

Bounce rate	56.34% (Source: Google Analytics)

The project set an expectation of over 10,000 unique pageviews and a bounce rate greater than 35%. However, the available data only provides total pageviews (9,946), which is not directly comparable to the unique pageviews target. Since total pageviews include multiple visits from the same users, it remains unclear whether the website met its goal in terms of unique visitors.

The website recorded 3,929 active users, and the high bounce rate of 56.34%. While this suggests that many visitors left after viewing only one page, the technical nature of the project makes these results acceptable at M18. We are confident we are on the right track and anticipate a steady increase in user engagement as the project progresses. This also provides valuable insights into areas where user experience and interaction can be further enhanced to foster deeper engagement with soil data.

With the upcoming launch of the SoilWise Repository (SWR) at the end of M18, we expect a significant boost in traffic. A series of demonstration events across the different User Cases (UC) will target specific groups and stakeholders. The launch will be widely promoted through stakeholder networks and social media, along with hands-on sessions designed to raise awareness and encourage participation. As the website serves as the primary access point to the SoilWise Repository, this increased visibility is expected to drive more unique pageviews, attract additional active users, and improve the bounce rate. The focus will be on engaging both potential users of the SWR and the wider community.

2.2 Social Media

SoilWise utilizes three social media platforms—LinkedIn, X (former Twitter), and Facebook—to share project activities, disseminate results, and promote relevant events. These platforms were selected for their ability to reach a diverse group of interested individuals, ranging from researchers and policymakers to farmers and civil society.

LinkedIn and X (former Twitter) accounts have been actively engaged in communicating the project's progress and outcomes. The X (Twitter) and LinkedIn statistics show that SoilWise posts reach the scientific audience, which is not surprising as the majority of the project's network consists of representatives from academia, EU organizations and other EU projects. During the first 18 months of project implementation, SoilWise has gained around 8.1K impressions (6.2 for original posts and 1.9K for reposted posts) on its X (former Twitter) account, 1,7K post reach on Facebook and 16.7K post impressions on LinkedIn account, with over 700 followers in total.

Table 3 Social Media Channels

Social media	Links
LinkedIn	https://www.linkedin.com/company/soilwiseproject
X (former Twitter)	@soilwiseproject
Facebook	@soilwiseproject

Table 4 Social Media Target Groups

Social media	Target group
LinkedIn	Targeting a business-oriented audience comprising

	agricultural institutions, organizations, agricultural groups, networks, and policy makers.
X (former Twitter)	A diverse audience consisting of practitioners, policy makers, scientists, and the general public.
Facebook	Targeting a semi-professional audience with a focus on engaging the general public, farmers (particularly within Facebook groups), and practitioners.

Table 5 Social Media Channels Analytics

Social Media	Followers	Posts	Interactions
LinkedIn	581	33	2,076
X (Twitter)	96	21	194
Facebook	41	20	81

Overall, LinkedIn appears to be the most effective platform for engagement and audience growth, with the highest number of impressions, followers, and interactions. X (former Twitter) shows moderate activity, indicating potential for further development with targeted efforts. Facebook, Facebook currently has lower engagement and a smaller audience compared to other platforms, however, still remains relevant for reaching specific groups and stakeholders within different UCs.

In the first eighteen months of the project, we primarily focused on project promotion and organization of the project, as well as events and training with stakeholders, and workshops for stakeholders organized by SoilWise. Our efforts also included the promotion of relevant initiatives from related networks and significant national days associated with soil and environmental sustainability.

In the previous phase of SoilWise social media strategy implementation, a series of campaigns aimed at strengthening the project's social media presence and fostering greater engagement were conducted within our network. These campaigns included:

- Project promoting campaign: This campaign provides an overview of the project's structure – USER CASES, SWR creation, news and information, project's current stage of implementation, and information about the institutions involved. It continues to run during the lifespan of the project, with one post per week on X (Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn, aligning with the seven work packages.

- Organizations of the Project: Adding a human touch to our social media presence, this campaign is introducing the organizations behind SoilWise, showcasing their professional profiles and research interests as well as their main activities and their quote on the topic combining soil and data. It continues to run concurrently with the other news on social media, with one post per week on the three major platforms.

- Events/Trainings with stakeholders: This campaign aims to highlight the different case-study areas of the project and the purpose and outcomes of the workshops and training courses which were and will be held for the project stakeholders. The duration is running through the entire project lifespan, with one post per week on X (Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Table 6 Project Social Media Channels and Status

Metric	Expected value	Status in M18	Achievement rate
Social Media Analytics in M18			
Social media channels	≥ 4	3	75%

Project Number 101112838

Social media followers	> 1,000	716	71,6%
Social media posts	> 1,000	74	7.4%
Interactions (altogether)	> 15K	2,3K	15,67%
Number of impressions	> 400K	26,6K	6,6%

Social media metrics have been consistently monitored to assess the effectiveness of the strategy, and this will continue moving forward. While several key performance indicators (KPIs) have yet to be fully achieved, notable progress has been made in certain areas:

- The project is actively using three social media channels, reaching 75% of the target for platform engagement.

- Follower growth is strong, with 71.6% of the goal achieved, indicating steady audience development.

- Number of interactions and impressions corresponds with the frequency of social media posts, reflecting a steady level of engagement and consistent interest from the audience.

Due to the nature of the project and the limited milestones achieved so far, current social media engagement was anticipated. As the project progresses, social media activity will be scaled up, with an anticipated increase in engagement. A key milestone—the launch of the SoilWise Repository—is scheduled for the end of M18. To maximize engagement, a series of demonstration events within each UC will be conducted, targeting a diverse range of stakeholders. The launch will be widely promoted through stakeholder networks and social media channels, supported by hands-on sessions to increase awareness and participation.

In the following phase of SoilWise's social media strategy, several campaigns have been launched to enhance the project's online presence and boost engagement, which will include:

- **Launch of the SoilWise Repository**: The launch of the SoilWise Repository is scheduled for the end of M18. The Repository will be widely promoted through stakeholder networks and social media channels.
- **The co-creation of demo's with a number of validators/testers creates additional ambassadors.**: The launch of the SoilWise Repository will be accompanied by online demonstration events designed to engage a wide range of stakeholders. These demo events are scheduled to take place across all five User Cases at the end of April or the beginning of May 2025.
- **Hands-on Trainings with Stakeholders**: Featuring case-study areas and hands-on workshops for stakeholders, with weekly posts throughout the project lifespan on X Network, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

2.3 Visual communication materials

The comprehensive suite of materials, including roll-up banners, posters, and leaflets, serves as a foundational

resource for effective communication. These materials not only convey key information but also bridge linguistic gaps, ensuring accessibility across diverse audiences within the consortium.

As part of the corporate branding campaign, a roll-up banner and leaflets containing key project information were designed to promote and highlight the main initiatives, helping to launch its activities. Additionally, a web version of the project leaflet has been published on the SoilWise website, featuring a downloadable option for users.

The flyers were distributed at various engagement events such as stakeholder forums, conferences, and internal workshops. These materials helped to visually communicate the project's objectives and attract interest from participants.
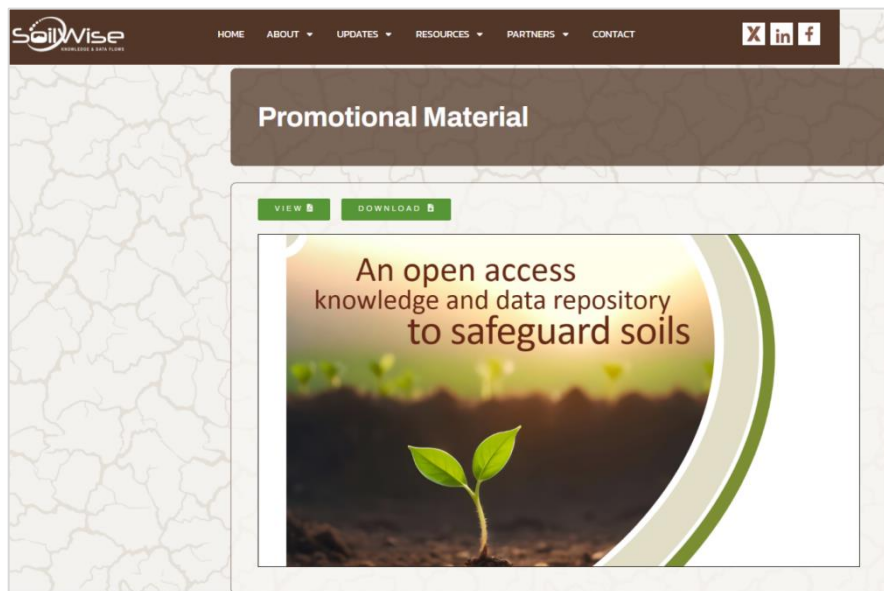
Picture 1 SoilWise Leaflet published on the project website

In response to requests from various User Cases, flyers, posters, and other visual materials have been created as part of the preparation for the upcoming demo events. While the materials are primarily prepared in English, some are also available in the local languages, which is of key importance to reaching specific steakholders like land managers. The QR code allowed for easy and immediate access to project resources and community engagement for facilitating connection.
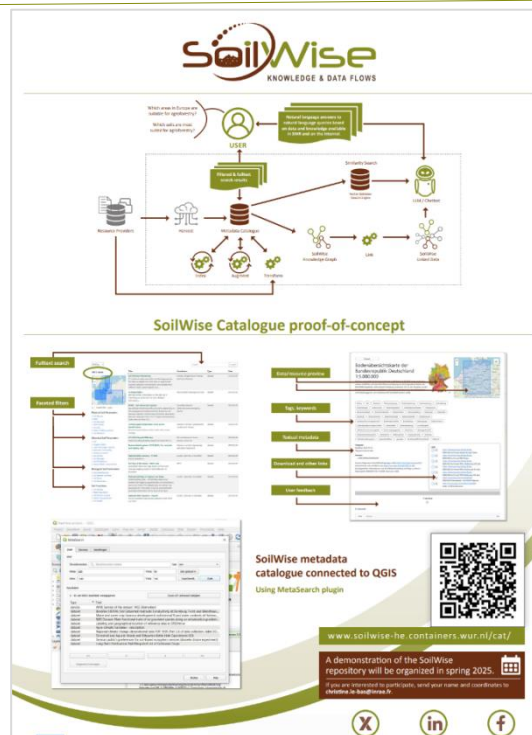
Picture 2 Example of SoilWise Poster

Table 7 Communication materials expected values

Metric	Expected value
Materials	2 sets of brochures, posters, leaflets, one-pagers, etc (translated to all consortium languages)

By M18, two sets of flyers had been designed, printed, and distributed at events attended by consortium partners. Additionally, web versions of the flyers and posters, tailored to the specific needs of each User Case stakeholder group, are being developed in preparation for the upcoming demo events. We anticipate a higher volume of requests for communication materials in the coming period. Not all promotional materials are translated into every consortium language; however, updated or translated versions are created as needed to ensure accessibility and relevance. More focusing on targeting specific groups who could benefit from the relevant topics and explore partnerships with related organizations. By aligning our content more closely with user interests and effectively promoting less-engaged topics, we will increase the relevance and impact of our information in the upcoming period. Interest is determined by content and vice versa.

2.4   Editorial materials

2.4.1   Press releases

Our extensive communication strategy includes a diverse range of avenues for disseminating information and insights. This targeted approach aims to influence decision-making and drive positive changes through well-informed policy recommendations.

To enhance project visibility and drive engagement, we started issuing press releases to spotlight key milestones and achievements. These releases are vital communication tools designed to reach a wide range of stakeholder groups and generate interest in our project. By distributing these updates, we aim to increase awareness, capture attention, and encourage collaboration within our community.

Table 8 SoilWise Press releases Status M18

Date	Title or topic	Link
24 April 2024	SoilWise First Milestone & SoilWise Repository Development Kick-Off	https://soilwise-he.eu/media-kit/

By Month 18 (M18), one press release was published in 2024, highlighting the first milestone. The first issued press release in the project was distributed among the project partners, translated and sent to media. The next press release is planned following the launch of the SoilWise Repository, bringing the total to two.

2.4.2   Publications

By Month 18 (M18), five media articles were published to introduce the project and its partners to our social media audience. These articles were featured on the SoilWise (SW) webpage as well as on several partner websites. Two of them were dedicated to civil society, and the rest to the research community.

By M18, partners from ZALF have published two scientific research articles in online journals. These articles focus on the impact of climate change on the productivity of agricultural long term field experiments and on a metadata set of ongoing European mid- and long-term agricultural field experiments.

Table 9 SoilWise Publications Status

Article	Time of the publication	Title of the Journal	Link
An open-source metadataset of running European mid- and long-term agricultural field experiments	January 2024	Soil Use and Management	link
Climate change causes spatial shifts in the productivity of agricultural long-term field experiments	April 2024	European Journal of Agronomy	link

Table 10 Editorial materials expected impact results

Metric	Expected value	Status in M18
Press releases		
Press releases to reach national & European media	> 8	1
Articles published in local, national, regional, EU media (printed or online)	> 50	5
TV & radio appearances	> 10	NA
Videos with success stories & interviews	> 10	NA
Non-specialized publications-articles published on the website	6	NA
Policy briefs for local, national EU policy makers	10	NA
Peer reviewed papers & conferences contributions.	≥ 10	2

To achieve this, WP6 relies on the input of all content WP's.. To achieve the targets within the remaining 30 months of the project, the plan includes publishing one at each milestone, or phase of the project concluded., a media article per month in local, national, regional, and EU media, one non-specialized publication every five months, and peer-reviewed papers every four months. Additionally, by month 48 (M48), the project aims to produce policy briefs for local, national EU policy makers, and success story videos. This strategy is regularly reviewed, discussed, and coordinated during the update meetings with consortium partners to ensure alignment with project objectives.

2.4.3   Newsletter

, Three editions of the newsletter are released annually with content centered around milestone achievements in the work plan. Each edition includes updates, insights, and articles featured on the SoilWise website. The Newsletter also includes details about upcoming and past events, achievements, and relevant messages for the SOILL community.

Table 11 Newsletter expected impact results

Metric	Expected value	Status M18

Newsletter		
Number of newsletters	4	3
Number of subscribers	2.000	136

Table 12 SoilWise Newsletter Editions

Newsletter	Date
Newsletter 1	1 December 2023
Newsletter 2	2 April 2024
Newsletter 3	3 October 2024

The next edition of the SoilWise Newsletter will be published at the end of M18, primarily focusing on a major project milestone—the launch of the SoilWise Repository. Subscriber numbers have steadily increased, and this growth is expected to continue as the project progresses, with further expansion anticipated in the upcoming stages. The upcoming edition will also provide an overview of the demo events already conducted, as well as details of the upcoming events within each User Case, engaging a wide range of stakeholder groups. It will feature insights from recent developments, success stories, and key upcoming events, fostering continued engagement and strengthening connections within the SoilWise community.

2.5 Events

2.5.1   Participation in International Annual Events with the Research Community

Project partners from EL ILVO participated in the **Soil O-live Annual Meeting** at the University of the Aegean in January 2024. Presenting the SoilWise project at the Soil O-Live meeting provided an excellent opportunity to highlight our shared commitment to soil health and sustainable agriculture. Both projects aim to enhance soil health; while Soil O-Live focuses on olive groves, SoilWise provides the data infrastructure to support such specialized studies.

Project partners from ISRIC, INRAE, and CIRAD presented on metadata, highlighting the aims and opportunities that SoilWise offers at the **ORCaSa Annual Meeting 2024**. The event, attended by project partners and regional hub leads—including EMBRAPA, CSIRO, FARA, and the University of Colorado—also explored connections between SoilWise and ongoing initiatives. These links were reinforced through the participation of partners involved in both BENCHMARKS and SoilWise, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Project partners from ISRIC and MU participated in the **BENCHMARKS Annual Meeting 2024**, engaging in WP on data and identifying links with SoilWise (attendance through partners that are part of EBNCHMARKS and SoilWise).

2.5.2   High-level events and campaigns

SoilWise representatives from ILVO, ISRIC World Soil Information, and Masaryk University participated in the **European Mission Soil Week** in both 2023 and 2024, organized by the European Commission's DG AGRI in collaboration with PREPSOIL and the EU Soil Observatory (EUSO). The 2023 event, held in Madrid, featured a keynote presentation by SoilWise, while the Joint Research Centre emphasized the role of data management plans for Soil Mission Projects. The 2024 edition, held in Brussels, focused on soil protection and sustainable land management, bringing together researchers, policymakers, farmers, and businesses to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing, particularly in relation to the Soil Working Report (SWR) and the SoilWise project.

Project partners from MU participated in the **4th EUSO Stakeholders Forum**, an online event held in October 2024. During the forum, the aim and key objectives of the SoilWise project were presented, alongside discussions on Data Management Plans of other Soil Mission projects. Additionally, meetings were held with the EUSO Working Group on Data Harmonization (2023) to explore collaboration and alignment on data standards.

2.5.3   Participation in International Annual Events with the National Authorities

Project partners from ISRIC and CREA participated in the **EIONET Annual Meeting of the EEA Forum**, an online event held in March 2023. During the meeting, they presented the current contributions of the SoilWise project, highlighting its potential to support national authorities and foster engagement within the broader community.

2.5.4   Engagement with the Regional Authorities

Project partners from DOMG and VLO presented the SoilWise project at the Data-Working Group GROND+Zaken, a platform that connects government officials and researchers involved in soil data management in Flanders. This working group facilitates collaboration and knowledge exchange on best practices, data standardization, and innovative approaches to soil information systems. By presenting at this event, SoilWise aimed to showcase its contributions to soil data integration and engage with key stakeholders to enhance cooperation in the region.

2.5.5   Engagement with Industry and Business Partners

Project partners from EL ILVO participated at the **European Big Data value Forum** in Budapest, where they presented the SoilWise project.

2.5.6   Engagement with Specific End User Communities

Project partners from ELO presented the SoilWise project at the **ELO General Assembly** in Warsaw, Poland, in November 2024.
Project partners from ISRIC, INRAE and CIRAD presented on metadata including a description of the aims and possibilities that SoilWise offers to the **ORCaSa Annual meeting 2024**. It was attended by project partners and regional hub leads (EMBRAPA, CSIRO, FARA, University of Colorado).
Partners from CIRAD and ISRIC held various interviews with **EU HORIZON Mission Soil** projects to understand the stakeholder needs for SoilWise.

2.5.7   Organization of a thematic event - technical meeting

Thematic event – Technical Milestone 1 meeting for the kick-off of the development phase of the SWR was organized in Bruges, Belgium for all partners on the project.

SoilWise WP1 meeting: Use Cases and requirements, internal meeting with partners was held in Heerlen, The Netherlands, in January 2024.

2.5.8   Presentation of the SoilWise project at other events

Project partners from ISRCI and MU presenting SoilWise at the **FAO Global Symposium on Soil Information and Data**, in Nanjing, China.

2.5.9 Stakeholder Engagement

Project partners from ISRIC and BIOS organized the **First SoilWise Stakeholder Engagement Event**, held online in September 2024. The event invited farmers, researchers, policymakers, and other key stakeholders to connect, collaborate, and contribute to the development of the SoilWise Repository while exploring opportunities for participation in the project. Participants were introduced to the project's latest outputs and were encouraged to share their insights through a stakeholder participation survey, helping shape the future direction of SoilWise. The event fostered dialogue and engagement, strengthening collaboration between diverse stakeholder groups.

2.5.10 Dissemination among EU networks

Activities within the SoilWise project were regularly disseminated through the Soil Mission Platform.

Table 13 Events with External Stakeholders

Metric	Expected value	Status in M18
Demonstration activities to boost knowledge sharing and replication of results	15	5
Dissemination events targeting **all SoilWise stakeholder groups.**	Minimum 3	1
Participation the Events (such as EUSO Stakeholder Forum, FarmDemo Conference, events organised by other Soil Mission projects	45	3
Dissemination among EU networks	5	9

2.5.11 Training activities

Demonstration Events UC2: Project partners from CIRAD organized two sessions with Soil Mission stakeholders, where they introduced the SoilWise project and provided an overview of the SoilWise Repository. These sessions served as a preliminary announcement for the official SoilWise Repository presentation, scheduled for the end of April. Following this launch, hands-on training sessions will be offered to stakeholders who require additional guidance on navigating and utilizing the Repository effectively. These interactive sessions aim to enhance stakeholder engagement and ensure that users can fully leverage the platform's capabilities.

Table 14 - Training and educational activities expected impact results

Metric	Expected value	Status in M18
Webinars/Trainings/Events	7 stakeholders (WP6) and capacity building workshops (WP6).	2
	10 webinars' material available online	1
Co-creating workshops	3 sessions organized	-

KPIs for events involving external stakeholders and training activities remain relevant. With the launch of the SoilWise Repository, a series of demonstration events will be conducted for stakeholders within each User Case, followed by hands-on sessions and an extensive promotional campaign. This is expected to significantly increase the number of demonstration and dissemination events, as well as stakeholder engagement and capacity-building workshops. The launch of the SWR will mark the beginning of intensified efforts to engage stakeholders in using the repository while also promoting the project itself.

2.6 KPIs for stakeholder engagement

To ensure a steady and well-coordinated dissemination schedule, we establish a timeline with milestones for the release of various publications. This timeline will be closely linked to the project's overall progress and key developments.

Table 15 Action plan related to publication within SoilWise

Type of activity	KPI per period of time	Status in M18
Press releases	Roughly 1 press release per year (this number is a subject to change in accordance with the necessities of the project)	The KPI has been achieved and will continue to be adjusted as needed to align with the project's requirements
Social networks activity	1 post per week are expected, around 50 new Twitter followers every 6 months average of over 500 impressions per Tweet average of 20 people reached per post on Facebook minimum 20% click-through rate on Creating a YouTube channel for partner usage/ success stories & interviews	The KPI has been achieved and will continue to be adjusted as needed to align with the project's requirements. The creation of the YouTube channel will align with the project's requirements in the following period.
Promotional materials	Whenever necessary an updated or translated version of the promotional	Whenever necessary an updated or translated version

	materials will be created	of the promotional materials will be created
Website media center	Updated regularly to include new information and multimedia materials as they come 4 000 pageviews of the website per year	Website media center has been regularly updated, already exceeding 6,000 views of the page per year
News and Events on the website	Minimum 1 per month (depending on project outputs)	The update is aligned with the project's requirements
Publications in relevant media	Minimum 2 per year	The KPI is still relevant, and it will be aligned with the project's requirements
Attendance of conferences	At least 4 national and at least 1 international conference during the project lifespan	The KPI is still relevant, and it will be aligned with the project's requirements
Electronic newsletter	1 issue per year	The KPI is still relevant, and it will be aligned with the project's requirements

The exploitation strategy for the SoilWise project has been successfully implemented, focusing on maximizing the project's results for tangible benefits in commercial, societal, and political areas through stakeholder engagement. The strategy involved actively involving external stakeholders from the SoilWise interactive stakeholder network, including key institutions and initiatives across Europe, and positioning SoilWise as a hub for diverse projects within the soil community.

The primary goals were to raise awareness, gain support, and enhance impact by sharing project findings through various channels like scientific papers and webinars. The stakeholder network has played a crucial role in aggregating information on the latest advancements in Soil Knowledge and Data Management, ensuring that the project's activities remain aligned with evolving trends.

Overall, the Capacity Building activities have been successfully carried out between M1 and M18, beginning with stakeholder mapping and progressing towards the establishment of a strong network foundation by the end of this project period. The approach has focused on fostering collaboration, disseminating knowledge, and adapting to developments in the field, ensuring the long-term impact and sustainability of the project outcomes.

2.7 Soil Mission Cluster meetings

The project actively seeks collaboration opportunities with other projects and established networks such as EJP Soil, PREPSOIL, ORCaSa, ESP, GSP, EUSO WGs, and the 2022-01 SOIL MISSION calls (04, 05, 06, 07, 09). This collaborative approach serves to enhance training and knowledge-sharing initiatives among a wide range of stakeholders. Moreover, it significantly extends the reach of their training materials by utilizing the SoilWise website as a central hub for dissemination.

2.7.1 Data and Knowledge Management Cluster

The **Data and Knowledge Management Cluster** was initiated in late 2023 as a collaborative space for the **Soil Mission projects** to address common challenges and best practices in data interoperability, governance, and knowledge exchange. The cluster serves as a structured forum for aligning project efforts with European

Commission expectations on data management and its role in driving impact for soil health initiatives.

The cluster is coordinated by a core team comprising **SoilWise, DG AGRI, REA, and JRC**, with **the Mission Soil Implementation Platform (MSIP)** facilitating the process. As an integral part of this core team, SoilWise has been actively involved in defining the scope, structuring discussions, and ensuring that both data providers and users contribute to the development of practical and scalable solutions. This involvement underscores SoilWise's key role in shaping the data management landscape within the Soil Mission projects.

Summary of Cluster Meetings

Throughout 2024, the SoilWise team participated in and contributed extensively to three cluster meetings, each with a distinct focus and purpose:

- **First Cluster Meeting – February 2024 (Online):**
  This initial meeting served as an introduction to the cluster, with SoilWise presenting its objectives and plans for data management. Other Soil Mission projects also outlined their approaches to data sharing, setting the stage for future discussions and collaboration.

- **Second Cluster Meeting – June 2024 (Online):**
  During this session, SoilWise provided an in-depth presentation on the development of the SoilWise Repository. As the repository was still under development, mockups were used to illustrate its functionalities and how it would facilitate cooperation between projects. Discussions focused on refining the approach to data integration and ensuring alignment with the needs of different stakeholders.

- **Third Cluster Meeting – November 2024 (In Person, Brussels):**
  Held the day after the Mission Soil Week, this full-day event was structured into two dedicated sessions:
  - **Morning Session (Data Providers):** Focused on the metadata template, with practical example drawn from the discussions during Mission Soil Week.
  - **Afternoon Session (Data Users – Researchers):** Explored new requirements for the repository, gathering input to refine its functionalities and prepare for future demonstrations with this user group.

The meeting fostered dynamic discussions, leading to concrete ideas for future cluster activities and strengthening the collaboration among Soil Mission projects.

Future Outlook and Next Steps

The **Data and Knowledge Management Cluster** has proven to be a vital platform for fostering collaboration, addressing common challenges, and ensuring alignment among Soil Mission projects. SoilWise's contributions have been instrumental in shaping discussions, facilitating knowledge exchange, and guiding the development of data management practices that support the broader objectives of the Mission Soil program.

Beyond its role in the cluster, SoilWise holds a key position within the Mission Soil program as recognized by the European Commission. With its capacity to develop tools and frameworks that enhance data interoperability and accessibility, SoilWise is uniquely positioned to maximize the impact of data-driven approaches to improving soil health. Additionally, its role as a liaison with the entire Mission Soil project cohort ensures that insights, requirements, and best practices from across the projects are integrated into shared solutions, further strengthening the long-term success of the program.

Moving forward, SoilWise will continue to drive collaboration within the cluster, ensuring that the evolving data infrastructure supports the needs of both data providers and users while aligning with European Commission priorities.

2.7.2   Other Soil Mission Clusters

In addition to its important role in the Data and Knowledge Management Cluster, SoilWise is actively engaged in two other key clusters under the Mission Soil Implementation Platform:

1. **Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Cluster:** This cluster focuses on fostering effective communication strategies and enhancing stakeholder involvement to promote soil health initiatives. By participating in this cluster, SoilWise contributes to the development of outreach activities, the dissemination of research findings, and the mobilization of various stakeholders. These efforts aim to raise awareness about the importance of soil health and encourage collaborative actions toward sustainable soil management.
2. **Indicators and Monitoring Cluster:** Dedicated to establishing robust frameworks for soil health assessment, this cluster works on developing standardized indicators and monitoring systems. This includes defining key indicators, establishing monitoring methodologies, and ensuring consistency in data collection to support policy and decision-making.

While SoilWise does not directly produce or work on indicators, it actively follows the discussions and developments within this cluster. The outcomes of this work are valuable for the **SoilWise Repository**, as the standardized indicators and monitoring data generated by the cluster can enhance the usability and relevance of the repository for researchers and policymakers. Additionally, new insights from this cluster need to be translated into the SoilWise platform, ensuring that the repository remains aligned with evolving monitoring needs and supports data-driven approaches to soil health assessment.

2.8 Synergies with the research projects through the User cases

Synergy of SoilWise project with the projects within the UC2: The SoilWise project is demonstrated to all the Soil Mission projects, at the Data and Knowledge Cluster in Brussels. Additionally, online demo sessions have been conducted with the following projects: Bin2Bean Project, Sus-Soil project, ECHO project, LOESS project, and SEACURE project.

Synergy of SoilWise project with the projects within the UC4: The European Network of Living Labs (EnoLL) gave access to their network of Living Labs.

Synergy of SoilWise project with the projects within the UC5: There is currently no active collaboration, but two projects have been singled out for potential collaboration, as we may have the opportunity to establish one in the future. The first one is Farmtopia, which aims at enhancing small-scale farming through accessible digital agricultural solutions and Quantifarm, which aims to bridge the gap between farmers and Digital Agriculture Solutions (DATs).

In the following period, the SoilWise DEC Plan aims to maximize its impact by customizing dissemination approaches for various stakeholder groups and collaborating with similar projects. This involves tailoring messages, channels, and activities for each group. Collaboration with relevant projects will be guided by mutual interests and involve a step-by-step plan for engagement.

The overarching aim of this endeavor is not only to facilitate the sharing of knowledge but also to foster continuous expansion and growth within the project, ensuring that its impact and reach continue to evolve over time. Therefore, SoilWise will organize workshops for stakeholders, and other interested parties to co-create the SWR and understand with the most important stakeholders, firstly what are their needs, their requirements

in terms of data and therefore understand how the SWR could have a maximized impact. The stakeholder mapping exercise will take place in WP6 in collaboration with WP1, for the purpose of co-creating the SWR repository.

All dissemination and communication tools will maintain used throughout the project for a minimum of 5 years after the project's completion. This extended maintenance period is intended to ensure ongoing visibility of SoilWise results.

The SWR is aimed to be integrated by EUSO after the end of the project, which will assure the continuation of the project's objectives. The maintenance will include:

1. Regular Updates: The project website will receive regular updates with posts and newsfeeds; Open-access results and dissemination materials such as booklets and posters will remain available for viewing and downloading.
2. Partner Contact Information: Partner contact details will be updated every semester, facilitating engagement with key internal, external, and potential stakeholders.
3. Web-Based Communication Channels: Other web-based communication channels, including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and SlideShare, will be actively used to share project outputs. These channels will feature the Monitoring Framework and other project results.
4. Collaboration: SoilWise will actively collaborate with relevant initiatives and projects to share updates and create new synergies, strengthening connections with the broader community.
5. SWR integrated in JRC's EUSO as a data and knowledge platform for the EU Soil Mission projects.

This approach ensures that SoilWise's achievements and information will remain accessible and relevant for an extended period, fostering continued engagement and collaboration with stakeholders.

3 Reflections on Lessons Learned

The first 18 months of the SoilWise project have been marked by significant progress in communication and dissemination, including a strong online presence and active stakeholder engagement across various channels. Building on this success, we will continue in the same manner, and after achieving the major milestone of launching the SoilWise Repository (SWR), we expect increased social media engagement, enhanced stakeholder involvement, and an expansion of our network. With these developments, we anticipate even greater activities and results in the upcoming phases of the project.

Website & Repository Launch
The SoilWise Repository (SWR) is set to launch at the end of Month 18 (M18), marking a key milestone for the project. To drive stakeholder engagement, a series of demonstration events will be organized, complemented by hands-on sessions. The launch will be widely promoted through stakeholder networks and social media channels, ensuring broad awareness and participation. Since the website serves as the primary gateway to the SWR, this increased exposure is expected to boost unique pageviews, attract more active users, and reduce bounce rates.

Social Media Strategy
Given the project's initial stages and milestones achieved so far, the current level of social media

engagement was anticipated. As the project advances, social media activity will increase, driving higher levels of engagement and broader visibility.

Stakeholder Engagement & Capacity Building

KPIs for external stakeholder events and training activities remain highly relevant. With the launch of the SoilWise Repository, a series of demonstration events will be conducted within each User Case, followed by hands-on sessions and an extensive promotional campaign. This is expected to significantly increase the number of demonstration and dissemination events, stakeholder interactions, and capacity-building workshops. The launch of the SWR will mark the beginning of intensified efforts to engage stakeholders in using the repository while also promoting the project itself.

3.1 Identified risks and corresponding mitigation measures

Through proactive planning and risk management, we have effectively anticipated and mitigated challenges, ensuring the project's continued success. By addressing potential risks early, we have enhanced the project's resilience and adaptability.

Risks related to intellectual property, scheduling, and personnel are managed through early identification, IP management, dynamic rescheduling, and resource allocation, ensuring the project's adaptability. In November 2023, a cease and desist letter was received from Thatchtec BV, a corporation from Netherlands, operating under the trade names "Thatchtec" and "Soilwise," claiming infringement of its trademark rights. Since then, project consortium and Thatchtec BV corporation have been in constructive discussions and have reached an amicable agreement, now under the process of singing by the consortium. To avoid confusion, a permanent link to Thatchtec's website will be added to the project homepage, accompanied by a legal notice clarifying that the Soilwise project is EU-funded and unrelated to Thatchtec's commercial activities. This notice will also be included in social media posts, the newsletter, and other project communications. Additionally, the hashtag #SoilWiseProject will replace #SoilWise in all social media posts related to the project.

Building on previous experience, we will continue to monitor and proactively anticipate risks related to intellectual property. Looking ahead, the IPR management process will be implemented, and the business model for the SWR and its contributors will be defined, adding value for users in various roles. These measures will further strengthen the project's ability to anticipate and mitigate risks, and we remain committed to effective IPR management throughout the project's lifespan.