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WOODMEADOWLIFE

„Restoring and promoting a long term sustainable management of Fennoscandian wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia“
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Deliverable in Action A3
Development of project replication strategy and communication plan

Communication Strategy

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the foundations of the *WoodMeadowLIFE* project's communication and engagement strategy and outlines the main principles of the communication strategy.

The *WoodMeadowLIFE* project aims to conserve, restore, and ensure the long-term sustainable management of wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia—one of Europe's most species-rich yet labour-intensive semi-natural habitats. The restoration of wooded meadows involves substantial landscape changes and requires strong public understanding and support. Increasing awareness of why these habitats need to be protected and restored is essential for strengthening the willingness of stakeholders, especially landowners and local communities, to participate in their management.

In recent years, nature-oriented audiences have been highly focused on forest conservation. The project's communication therefore plays a critical role in clarifying that wooded meadow restoration does not take place at the expense of valuable forest ecosystems. Instead, it contributes to ecological connectivity, enhances overall forest and meadow biodiversity, and supports species that depend on light-rich, sparsely wooded conditions. Communicating this relationship transparently and scientifically is vital to prevent misconceptions and reduce potential conflicts.

Wooded meadow conservation presents several communication challenges related to landowners' interests, conservation dilemmas, cultural heritage values, and diverse public expectations. To address these, the project developed a comprehensive communication strategy that guides all communication actions (E1–E5). The strategy defines priority communication channels, target-group-specific messages and thematic focuses, approaches to conflict mitigation, media presence guidelines, LIFE programme communication requirements, the content and structure of the project website, and rules for documenting media appearances.

The communication plan was prepared collaboratively by partner organisations' communication teams and project staff, under the leadership of external consultants from the communication bureau Hamburg & Partners. It was developed through joint brainstorming sessions complemented by consultations with partners, the media, and communication professionals.

To ensure continued relevance and effectiveness, the communication plan will be updated annually under Action E1, using insights from web analytics, media monitoring, stakeholder feedback, and project team observations. This adaptive, feedback-driven approach ensures that the project's communication remains scientifically based, timely, accessible, and aligned with the overarching conservation goals of *WoodMeadowLIFE*.

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1. Introduction and project background

The Estonian-Latvian joint LIFE project "Restoring and promoting a long-term sustainable management of Fennoscandian wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia" focuses on the restoration of wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia, creation of sustainable solutions for maintenance and on raising public awareness of the natural and cultural heritage of wooded meadows and their protection and management.

Wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia make up approximately 60% of all wooded meadows in the boreal region. The potential for wooded meadows in Estonia is about 3000 hectares and in Latvia about 1100 hectares. In the year 2022 about 1200 hectares of wooded meadows were maintained in Estonia. In Latvia the number of maintained wooded meadows in 2021 was 343 hectares. The project WoodMeadowLIFE goal is to increase the area of maintained wooded meadows in Estonia by 500 hectares and in Latvia by 200 hectares.

The total aim is to maintain by year 2027 about 2000 hectares of wooded meadows in Estonia and 992 hectares in Latvia. There are in total 33 project areas in Estonia and Latvia, of which 25 project areas in Estonia and 8 project areas in Latvia.

The aim of the project is to restore overgrown wooded meadows and carry out activities to improve the condition of the habitat and species. In addition to improving the condition of wooded meadows, the project aims to promote the sustainable maintenance of wooded meadows, monitor the effectiveness of the project, and increase public awareness of the natural and cultural heritage of wooded meadows and their protection and management. Another vital goal of the project is raising awareness.

In Estonia wooded meadows are defined as sparse natural stands that are regularly mowed. They are mosaicked habitats where meadow areas alternate with different species and ages of trees and groups of trees or shrubs. In Latvia wooded meadows are almost exclusively grazed and not mowed. Compared to Estonian wooded meadows they are also less mosaicked and with less variety in trees and shrubs.

Considering the aim of the project, the role of communication is very important to increase the awareness of the general public, interest and involvement of the landowners, local governments, and communities. The communication strategy includes situation analysis and conclusions; communication goals and main messages; target and stakeholder groups; communication channels and formats; risks and challenges; communication action plan for the upcoming years.

In accordance with the framework and scope of the strategy previously agreed upon with the Environmental Board, the communication strategy is based on the project materials, media coverage, interviews with partner representatives and stakeholders and other publicly available materials. Project partners are Estonian Environmental Board (the leading partner), Estonian Fund for Nature, Estonian Seminatural Community Conservation Association, University of Tartu, Estonian Academy of Arts and Latvian Fund for Nature. On European Union level, European chapter of Society of Ecological Restoration (SERE) is also considered as a partner. SERE is responsible for networking and the transfer of best practices across

the European Union. Communication of WoodMeadowLIFE at international scale will also take place through the Replication Plan coordinated by SER Europe (Society of Ecological Restoration Europe). Replication activities will disseminate project good practices and methodologies to be applied to other geographical contexts while also contributing to project communication.

The communication strategy was prepared by the communication bureau Hamburg & Partners on behalf of the Environmental Board between September 1st, 2022 and December 1st, 2022. The project team included consultants Mihkel Lendok, Gerda Triin Hääl and Kristi Jõesaar.

2. Current situation

This chapter presents short overview of the media activities, content and activity of the webpage, social media channels and media coverage. In addition, summarises the lessons from previous activities and seminars. More detailed analysis is added in Appendix 1.

Media. The analysis shows that wooded meadow and/or project activities has been covered very little in Estonian and Latvian media. Most publications are just mentions and not covering wooded meadows in a meaningful way. Bigger part of the publications came from local newspapers that covered the topic in a local setting and showing the results of some local area restoration.

Social media. The WoodMeadowLIFE project is in Estonia represented through the *Eesti pärandniidud* Facebook page. Main topics covered on social media are activities, sharing different pictures from semi-natural habitats around Estonia and sharing relevant posts from partners channels. In Latvia, the semi-natural habitats topic and the campaign within the project GrassLIFE was covered through the Latvian Fund for Nature (*Latvijas Dabas fonds*) Facebook page and there has not been a focused or separate social media communication regarding wooded meadows.

Other sources. The analysis also includes the recording of the award ceremony for managers of semi-natural habitats and the following seminar. Prominent was the question of how to sustain the maintenance activities in the long run and make the land economically self-sustainable also without the subsidies and when not using the land as a grazing area.

Previous activities. During interviews and meetings with the stakeholders and target groups appeared that most effective way is to have direct communication with landowners. Also, some examples of nationwide campaigns and projects were mentioned like landscape reading tour or nature conservation holidays. In Latvia, the project GrassLIFE (www.grasslife.lv) about the semi-natural habitats, including wooded meadows was considered successful.

3. Expectations of project partners' representatives

To map partners' expectations for communication activities, in-depth interviews were conducted with the main partners of the project as the main stakeholders named by the Environmental Board. The interviewees were representatives of the Environmental Board, Estonian Seminatural Community Conservation Association, Estonian Fund for Nature, University of Tartu and The Latvian Fund for Nature. The goal for the interviews was to map the partners' roles and co-operation, their opinions of knowledge and communications so far and expectations on objectives, channels and activities for future communication.

The partners highlighted that the co-operation regarding the project so far has been good. The communication activities are mainly the task of Environmental Board; however, other partners have shown interest and readiness to contribute to communications as well. The target groups are very well defined, but raising awareness in the target groups has not been sufficient so far. As communication with landowners has shown, direct contact is the most effective way to get landowners to join the project.

Almost all partners in Estonia and Latvia feel that there should be communication directed to the general public, to raise awareness of wooded meadows and their importance and connect wooded meadows to a normal part of Estonian nature and culture. It means that communication should be simple and understandable to remind people the value of the wooded meadows.

4. Expectations of target groups

As target group representatives, the interviewees were: landowner, restorer/manager, local community representative and local government representative. From Latvia also a landowner and restorer/manager. Goal of the interviews was to map the target group's motivations, co-operation with stakeholders, target groups opinions and communications so far as well as expectations, objectives, channels, and activities for future communication.

The target group's motivations to participate in the project are not financial, but rather value based. Mostly connected to the desire to restore their family farm and memories of what the place used to look like. The co-operation with the project and its leaders is considered good. More problems emerge with the co-operation of local government and community members.

Leaving financial support aside, the biggest restrictors are considered the new residents who have moved into the countryside and consider environmental topics a high priority. This is connected to the general society's opinion that forest cutting in any form is bad and should be banned. This leads to an understanding that general society and some landowners have a rather poor awareness of the project and of the natural biome of the region.

To increase awareness, more focus should be put on the project areas already finished, showing these to the public and introducing all the benefits it provides. At the same time

using them as great examples and case studies to show to other landowners. They also need to see the end results and get the unfiltered information from other landowners.

5. Baseline of the communication strategy

The general communication strategy is based on the findings of all previous materials and interviews with stakeholders and target groups. The strategy outlines the main principles, directions, and communication activities to achieve the goals of the project WoodMeadowLIFE.

5.1. Main conclusions for the strategy

Below are brought out and highlighted previously repeatedly mentioned aspects that stand out as more relevant and thus form the basis for the communication strategy.

Partners and stakeholders

- Project partners roles and responsibilities are clear and co-operation is working.
- Partners have expressed even a bigger readiness to be more involved in the communication activities.
- To get landowners to join the project, the most effective way is direct contact.
- Communication should be directed to the general public, to raise awareness of wooded meadows and their importance and connect wooded meadows to a normal part of Estonian nature and culture.
- Communication formats and language should be simple and understandable.

Target groups

- The level of knowledge among target groups about the project and wooded meadows is low, therefore it is important to increase overall awareness of wooded meadows and the importance of restoration activities.
- In the scope of the projects success the most important target groups are landowners and general public.
- Landowners who are already actively restoring are aware of the project, this should be expanded to landowners who are not part of the project, but own project area lands.
- Generally, the co-operation between landowners and communities is good, but the co-operation with municipalities needs to be improved.

Landowners' motivations

- The best way to encourage new landowners is to show what has been done and what benefits this project gives to the environment and people.
- Landowners feel the application process for subsidy is not too difficult, but beginners need more instructions and support to keep up their motivation.

- With landowners informative seminars and direct communication have proven to work very well, this should be made more efficient.
- In addition, comfortable direct networking via private chat groups and social media groups with like-minded people and partners are also beneficial.

Channels

- Visibility in media is modest, there's potential to increase the number of publications in national, local and environment specific media.
- Informative and public events, and campaigns have proven successful in Estonia and Latvia, it's reasonable to continue and amplify.

5.2. Challenges and risks

In the following chapter, challenges have been listed that emerged during research and analysis of interviews and previous materials. These need to be additionally solved with communication activities, or considered to mitigate risks, and which might require more resources to solve.

Challenges

- Changing the wider public's awareness and mindset in a short period of time is difficult, there's a need to think about larger-scale events/spokespersons/influencers for general public and communication.
- The motivation of landowners is greatly influenced by the amount of subsidy. This motivation should be brought more to balance with environmental and inner emotional motivations.
- Landowners find that the system is being built on everyone's „conscience ", not compensating costs – so their work must be valued in communication and find means to strengthen relationship with landowners.
- The role and contribution of local municipalities to restore and maintain wooded meadows is low, this needs to be increased.
- The support and conscious appreciation from communities for the restoration and maintenance of wooded meadows is rare, this can be increased through local events, information materials and media.

Communication risks

Communication risks outline the possible obstacles that might impede successful communication and fulfilling the communications strategy. Risks related to the project implementation and mitigation strategy are separately found in the project strategy.

Risk	Description	Impact*	Likelihood**	Management
Lack of interest from landowners	Modest economic motivation for landowners to join	Intolerable	Probable	- User-friendly, clear, and relevant information as

	the project and commit to restoration. Partial failure of the project / failure to achieve objectives			well as support for landowners - Highlighting active landowners and valuing their work - Recognition of contributions to uniqueness and biodiversity
Social pressure to stop deforestation or perception of negative impacts on animals, climate, forest	Pressure of active interest groups (including the media) to stop logging, including deforestation, negative impact on animals and climate in general. Labelling the project as destruction of nature and damaging the reputation of landowners	Unacceptable	Possible	crs
Wrong practice / poor quality of work by individual landowners or restorers	Sub-standard work or failures by landowners or their sub-contractors, and their exposure to the media. Negative impact on the purpose and value of the project	Unacceptable	Possible	- Specific and relevant information, support and advice - Availability of guidance materials - Flexible and rapid response to negative cases
Lack of support from communities and local government	Insufficient support for the project and its objectives, lack of support for landowners and enhancing the value of the wood meadows.	Tolerable	Improbable	- Increasing public and stakeholder awareness - Implementing inclusive campaigns and initiatives - Highlighting active landowners and valuing their work - Increasing local municipalities awareness, incl. success stories - close co-operation between state, local municipalities, and landowners (seminars, meetings)

Inconsistencies in project implementation lack of cooperation between partners	Differing visions of communication initiatives and cooperation among partners, insufficient support for landowners	Unacceptable	Improbable	- Approval of a communication strategy and clear division of roles - Regular meetings and assessments of project progress and potential risks.
Inadequate communication and lack of resources to implement actions	Allocation of insufficient communication resources or lack of flexibility to change the agenda	Unacceptable	Improbable	- Setting up and agreeing on annual communication action plan - Regular evaluation of the action plan and introduction of necessary changes if needed - Agreement on the financial and human resources for the period of whole project.

Table 1. Communication risks.

** Impact to communication: tolerable – effects are felt but do not seriously effect; unacceptable – causes major disruption; intolerable – project may not recover*

*** Likelihood: probable – very likely to happen; possible – some chance of happening; improbable – small chance of happening*

6. Objectives

Based on the previous information and analysis one main goal and six supportive sub-goals for communication are formed.

Figure 1. Main communication objective and six supporting sub-goals.

Main goal: raise general awareness

To fulfil the project goal of restoring altogether 700ha of wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia, the main communication objective should be raising general awareness of the essence and importance of wooded meadows.

Wooded meadows are important to nature, animals, ecosystem, landowners, local communities, tourists, nature lovers, and they also carry the historical and cultural importance. That is why the objective is to create and enhance the general feeling and understanding of the vitality of restoring and supporting the restoration of wooded meadows and realisation that wooded meadows are a highly endangered habitat that is in a bad conservation state.

This main goal connects and is aimed at all target groups: landowners, restorers/maintainers, local communities, and the wider public. The intention is to introduce wooded meadows as a natural, historic, and integral part of Estonian and Latvian nature ecosystem and create a positive image for wooded meadows and the landscape.

This objective contributes to gathering and enhance public's support for the project and to of wooded meadows importance in the ecosystem. If the public, and local communities, are aware of the project and restoration of wooded meadows, they are not so frightened about the visuals from the meadows in the restoring process and value landowners work.

Sub-goal: raise landowner awareness

Closely tied to the main goal should be the sub-goal of raising landowner awareness, as well as educating and informing them about the project.

Besides raising awareness, the landowners need more detailed information and instructions of why it's important to restore and maintain wooded meadows and how they play a valuable part in it. The goal would be to show landowners the benefit of wooded meadows and introduce different tools and support system to owners, but also restorers and maintainers.

From the interviews, it was learnt that landowners are not too informed about wooded meadows and the importance of restoring them. However, there was an indication that if landowners are better informed, their willingness to participate in the project is considerably higher.

In Latvia, the focus of communication is on raising landowner awareness. They are working on a more regional level and aiming landowners directly. Although passive landowners, who are not managing their land or not aware they have a wooded meadow, are targeted through the general public.

Sub-goal: raise motivation of interested landowners and support them

The landowners who already have the basic knowledge of the program and interest of joining should receive effective and comprehensive information and consultation. At the same time the information should not be too overwhelming so that they would not get the feeling of too much work or bureaucracy. They should get the feeling of being valued for their interest and effort.

Sub-goal: increase co-operation between landowners, restorers, and maintainers

Restoring and maintaining the project areas requires considerable resources and co-operation from the landowners, restorers, and maintainers. Usually, one project area spans across several different landowner estates, requires the use of access roads and specialised machinery. Building stronger co-operation creates more opportunities and motivation for people to join the project.

Sub-goal: establish efficient co-operation with municipalities and local communities

Efficient co-operation with the municipalities and local communities raises awareness, pre-emptively dissolves potential problems (restricting access, protesting the cutting of trees etc.) and helps to involve them in the restoring effort.

Sub-goal: improve co-operation between landowners and the state

The landowners should be more aware of the co-operation opportunities and support from the state/government side so they would know that the restoring and wellbeing of the local ecosystem and nature is in everybody's interest. State is offering its support for landowners, not trying to control and tell the landowner what they should do.

Sub-goal: wider European communication in connection with the Replication Plan

WoodMeadowLIFE Replication Plan coordinated by SER Europe will target the replication of good practices and methodologies for wooded meadows restoration framed in a wider silvopasture restoration target. Activities in this replication plan will also contribute to communication targets and include a variety of approaches: European replication workgroup, webinars, exchanges, etc.

7. Target groups and stakeholders

The stakeholders and target groups are the direct and indirect consumers and receivers of the communication activities. They are the influencers of opinions and are being influenced by them. The list of stakeholders and target groups is the basis for developing and planning the main messages of communication activities.

7.1. Target groups

The main target groups for the project are landowners, restorers, maintainers, local communities, local governments/municipalities, and the general public. Often the target groups also overlap. A lot of project participants are landowners, but at the same time restorers and maintainers.

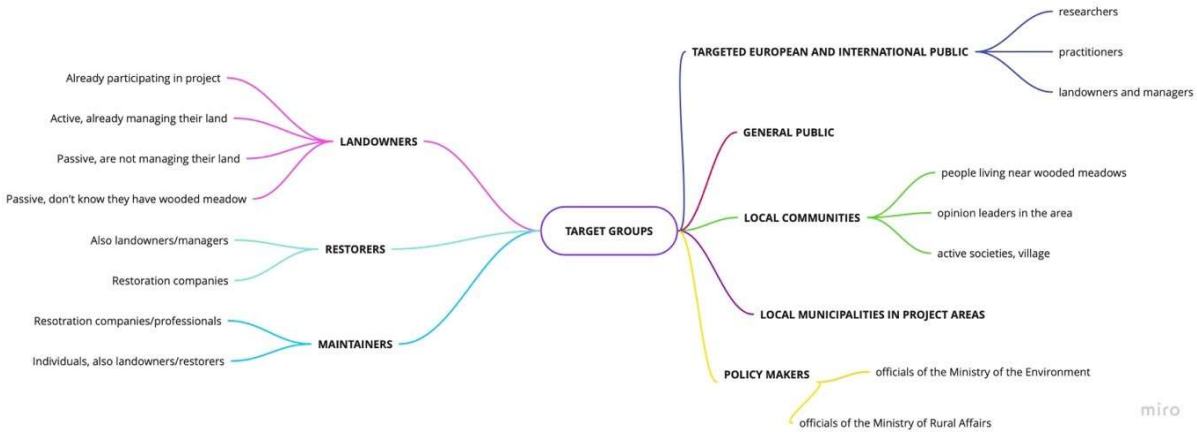

Figure 2. Target groups and their division by characteristics.

Landowners

The main target group that makes the decision and with it takes on the work and responsibility. Unusual about this project is that all the landowners are already known by name. So, the target group of landowners is extremely well defined and their names and contacts are already known and accessible. In Latvia, the landowners are yet to be selected, and it will be done during the project implementation.

The landowners are often at the same time also restorers and/or maintainers. Generally, they can be divided by landowners actively restoring and maintaining meadows, and passive landowners, not living nearby or not continually working on restoration and maintenance.

The first are strongly motivated by internal and emotional values when considering joining the project. Although the subsidy part also plays an integral role.

The passive landowners have considerably lower knowledge of wooded meadows and its possible benefits. They have lower motivations concerning emotional values and are more influenced by the subsidies and possible extra work needed to be done for restauration and maintenance.

Restorers

Restorers are often at the same time also landowners and/or maintainers. This target group is doing the actual work of restoration that needs specialised equipment, knowledge, and experience. They are "the face" of the project because their work is what all others base their opinion of the project on. They are also the ones who might get criticized the most if the restoration work is not done properly or is in its beginning stages. Often restorers are the one who attract landowners to restoration.

Restorers are strongly motivated by the subsidies and ease of work. A strongly restricting factor for them is the specialized knowledge, experience and equipment needed for the restoring work.

Maintainers

Often the same people as landowners and/or restorers. As the project requires a commitment of 20 years of maintenance of the project area, all involved with management must be well prepared and motivated. This also requires specialised knowledge, equipment and/or animals to keep the areas properly maintained.
They need to see the clear benefits of their long-time commitment to the project, weather emotional or economical.

Local communities

As wooded meadows are an important part of the local ecosystem, it's critical to take into consideration the local community living in the area. Local community has a big part as an opinion leader in the area. If the local people have a negative perception of "cutting down trees for any reason" then landowners might not join the project by their influence. If the local community supports and values the project and landowners, they can influence more areas to join the project.

Local communities are mainly motivated by improving their living environment or at least not making it worse.

Policy makers

The officials of the Ministry of the Environment and of the Ministry of the Agriculture should also be considered as a target group to strengthen the relationship between landowners and the state. The goal is to establish co-operation between landowners and state and make landowners acknowledge and recognize the support from the government.

General public

The general public includes not only the local communities, but also all others that might visit wooded meadows or form an opinion about it. If the public feels that the restoration is for any

reason is bad or badly done, then the landowners have lower levels of motivation to join the project.

General public is motivated by the universal improvement of local nature and ecosystem, national pride of unique habitats, possible locations to visit.

Local government

Not part of the project restoration process, but generally responsible for the whole development of their area and community. They are also an important stakeholder to gain proper permissions, keep access roads in order etc.

Local governments should be motivated by the benefits of having restored and maintained wooded meadows in their area. Through it improving the quality of living in local communities, providing work, and gaining tourism.

Targeted European and international public

Via the Replication Plan, specific groups at European level and, when relevant, internationally, will be targeted; namely researchers, practitioners and land managers and owners, always at a professional and practical level, not so much for wider education and awareness.

The audiences of +400 members of SER Europe and +4000 members of SER International, together with all the network of contacts at scientific, restoration practice and training scale across Europe will form the base to extend the project replication.

7.2 Stakeholders

In this chapter, people, organisations etc. are concluded and selected into groups, who are the most connected and engaged to the communication of the restoration and maintenance of wooded meadows. These groups are called stakeholders.

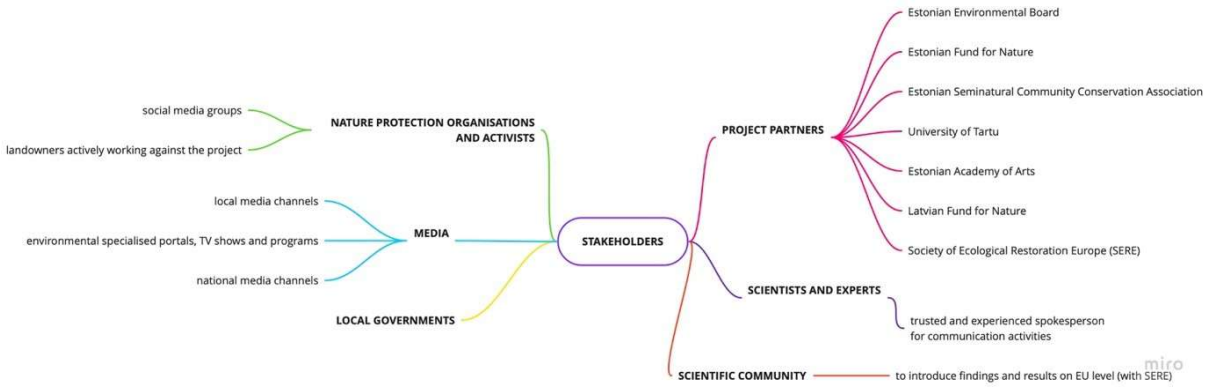

Figure 3. Stakeholders and their division by characteristics

Project partners

The main project partners are Estonian Environmental Board (the leading partner), Estonian Fund for Nature, Estonian Seminatural Community Conservation Association, University of Tartu, Estonian Academy of Arts and Latvian Fund for Nature. They give credibility and wider perspective to the project and are important partners in communicating with target groups. Partners roles and responsibilities are clear and so far, the co-operation has been good, although partners have expressed readiness to contribute more to the communication activities. On European Union level, the European chapter of Society of Ecological Restoration (SERE) is also considered as a partner. SERE is responsible for the networking and the transfer of best practices across the European Union.

Scientists and experts

As a stakeholder group, trustworthy and experienced group of scientists and experts should be established. These are the people who have extensive knowledge and experience with everything related to wooded meadows and who are ready to act as spokespersons in various activities in different channels.

Nature protection organisations and activists

Nature protection organisations (e.g., Estonian Forest Aid) and activists are active and voice their concerns publicly and loudly. They are well organised and through social media and events take more part in environmental discussions and bring to light possible problems. To mitigate the possibility of their negative reactions and movements against restoring activities they should be included in the project information flow and activities.
The organisations and activists have the ability to offer third-party opinion and act as a spokesperson for the benefits of restoring wooded meadows. (Landowners, who are actively working against land maintenance are not considered as a target group. They are categorised under nature conservation organisations and activists.)

Media

Media plays an important part in communication of environmental topics, decisions, and development. Public discussion takes place in media and the attitude, observations and highlight of media channels also influences the opinion and mindset of local communities.

This stakeholder group consists of primarily local (counties and parishes) newspapers and radios but also larger national news media channels and environmental specialised portals, TV shows and programs.

Local government

Local municipalities are named both as target groups and stakeholders. They are placed here because as the project goes on and awareness and collaboration improves, local municipalities should be considered as a partner in executing the restoration work in project areas. Local governments are not directly involved with the project but play integral part in

the development of their area, communication with the landowners and local communities. They are also responsible for road access, maintenance and other aspects that are important for successful and smooth restoration and maintenance work.

8. Language of communication, formats, and channels

The communication strategy is a general roadmap for principles how to deliver our communication messages to our identified target groups. It describes what form of communication the content should take and what channels to use for sharing. The exact plans for communication activities will be described later in the communication action plan (Appendix 4).

Vision

The vision of the project is to restore overgrown wooded meadows and carry out activities to improve the condition of the habitat and species. In addition to improving the condition of wooded meadows, the project aims to promote the sustainable maintenance of wooded meadows, monitor the effectiveness of the project, and increase public awareness of the natural and cultural heritage of wooded meadows and their protection and management.

As a result of the previous analysis and considering the aim of the project, the vision of communication for WoodMeadowLIFE project could be following:
The restoration and sustainable management of wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia begins with raising awareness about the importance and purpose of the project, primarily in the general society and among landowners, but also in communities and local governments through well-targeted events (e.g., campaigns, competitions, concerts etc.), media activities and information materials.

8.1. Language and formats

The language and formats differ in target groups. Below are the language and formats suggested to use with each target group.

Landowners

It is important to consider that the landowners are divided into two main categories: landowners actively restoring and maintaining meadows, and passive landowners, not living nearby or not continually working on restoration and maintenance.

For the first category, the language should be practical and more on the unformal side to dissipate fears that involvement in the project requires lots of bureaucracy. The language should be motivating, encouraging, and expressing appreciation. For example, the information given to them should be with precise numbers, tips, contacts etc. They already are participating in the program, so they don’t need so much background information, but more concrete advice.

The second group needs less practical and more informative language in the beginning to ease them into the topic. Later, similar language as for the first group is implemented, with slightly more emphasis put on helpfulness. For example, they need more information, why the project, the wooded meadows and their participation is important, how their restoration work helps the ecosystem of the whole local nature, how joining the project works etc.

The main format of communication with the landowners should be first-hand (even face-to-face), friendly and unformal interaction. For example, phone calls, meetings at their land, meetings together with neighboring project area landowners. In addition, conclusive informative materials should be used that concentrate together the most important information, questions and answers about the project and wooded meadows.

Restorers/maintainers

Restorers/maintainers are very similar to landowners as they also need a very practical and collegial language. For example, concrete information about project subsidies, meetings etc. and in a language that conveys that all the project partners are in it together and as a team. Main formats should include first-hand interactions and continuous feedback about the progress of the project and their part in it.

Local communities

The language should be simple, but informative, considering that they have a higher interest in what is going on in their neighbourhood. Therefore, it is important to talk about and explain all the stages of restoration work. The language should be engaging so as not to make them feel that their opinion is not valued. For example, explaining the importance of wooded meadows not in a scientific language, but in an easy way, so that also people without any knowledge about biology etc. would understand why wooded meadows are important.

The format of communication that resonates the most with local communities is mostly events they can attend and actively participate in (on the spot of the meadows), local media and official pre-emptive information from their municipality.

Local government/municipality

When considering municipalities also as a stakeholder of the project, the language should be inclusive and collegial. For example, giving them information about upcoming activates in their area before going to the public and letting them know that also their input is important. The goal is for them to be a part of the project and co-operative to help with disseminating information and organising the restoration work (e.g., keeping access roads in order etc.).

Main format should be proactive meetings with the officials and continuous information giving to always have them in the loop of what's happening in the project in their area.

General public

For the public, the language of communication should be easy and visual to first introduce the basic information about wooded meadows and highlight their importance. For example, use a lot of pictures of historic and already restored wooded meadows, of the numerous species that would live on the wooded meadows etc. The goal is to create a positive public image about wooded meadows in an understandable and relatable way. The tone of language should be positive and looking into the future. For example, showing more the end results of the restoration and explaining that the restoration process itself is only temporary.

Various possible formats of communication should be used as the wide public has very different motivations and interests. The centre of it should be a larger and noticeable communication campaign that consists of media activities, events, informational materials, engaging competitions or activities etc.

8.2. Communication channels

Here are the most important communication channels, through which the project's target groups and stakeholders will be reached.

LAND-OWNERS	RESTORERS/ MAINTAINERS	LOCAL COMMUNITIES	LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES	GENERAL PUBLIC	POLICY MAKERS
Homepage	Homepage			Homepage	
Direct contact	Direct contact		Direct contact		Direct contact
Social media		Social media		Social media	
Informative material	Informative material				
Public events	Public events	Public events		Public events	Events
		Media		Media	
		Campaign		Campaign	

Table 2. All target groups and channels directed to them.

Homepage

Homepage should be the first channel our target groups are directed to, when looking for information on the project and wooded meadows' restoration. In its current state, the homepage is quite formal and lacks attractiveness. The necessary information is difficult to find and gets lost in the background. The page should be redesigned according to target groups' needs and interests. It would be suggested to create an easy and simple-to-find name (or linked alias homepage) for the homepage, for example www.puisniidud.ee, www.parkveidaplava.lv, plava.lv etc.

Home pages search engine optimization (SEO) should be enhanced. Additional analysis of target group key search words should be done. On base of which the sites texts should be adapted for the best SEO practices based on target group search preferences (include keywords in texts, create meta data descriptions etc.).

To reach a wider audience and those that are interested in environment activities, Google ads should support the home page.

There could be a sub-section for landowners including all information they may come searching for – project areas, needs for applying, requirements, options and possibilities for restoration and maintenance, restorers' contacts in the area, local municipality, and land maintenance specialist's contacts etc.

Another sub-section for wide public with the basic information about wooded meadows, the concept and importance. This should also be illustrated with beautiful and relatable visuals, e.g., a family having a picnic on the meadow or children looking at insects and birds in the wooded meadow.

For the upgrading and restructuring of the home page, the needs and interests of target groups should be mapped more specifically, for example by completing a survey on what they information are they expecting to find.

Direct contact (phone calls, meeting on the spot etc)

As a target group, landowners are all known and identified. As previous lessons and interviews showed, sending e-mails is not working when contacting and communicating with landowners. The most effective way is to speak directly, on the phone or on the meadow. If the answers to e-mails from landowners are not actively coming in, project managers should contact landowners by phone, to establish contact and a personal relationship.

As to a partner, the same approach should be taken with municipalities. The project areas are known and as such also the municipalities they fall under. Thus, building a relationship and networking with the officials directly will only benefit the project moving forward.

In Latvia, during the GrassLIFE project there was created an active WhatsApp group chat, where landowners can ask their questions and share their thoughts and receive almost immediate feedback. Similar community should be made during WoodMeadowLIFE project for landowners and others directly connected to wooded meadows and their management.

Social media

Social media's content is directed to all target groups. Firstly, it's for the active and already interested people, who have found their way to the project channel and are already liking/following to gather information about wooded and other semi-natural meadows. These can be landowners, restorers/maintainers, and locals.

Secondly, informative posts and attractive visuals target wider public, to gain new followers and spark interest about semi-natural meadows, wooded meadows. This can be achieved with posting short videos to social media that have better organic reach.

To gain more reach in Facebook, it's suggested to tag the people and organisations connected to the post. This way they can also share it on their timeline and the post already has a bigger

reach. For example, collaborate with project partners across SM channels to share, tag and join each other's activities in project topics.

In addition to having social media account, a lot of information moves inside Facebook groups and Facebook messenger chats. As there is no relevant existing group and/or chat in Facebook, this would be a good place to start and manage a Facebook community which gathers all wooded meadows' interested parties, landowners, restorers, maintainers etc. This would be the Estonian equivalent to Latvians WhatsApp group, since Facebook is more popular than WhatsApp in Estonia.

The Facebook group would be initiated by WoodMeadowLIFE, but the goal would be to have it managed by the members themselves. This means having a group for landowners, restorers, and maintainers, where they can post questions, share their experience and knowledge about restoring and managing wooded meadows. This would be mainly focused on the people connected to WoodMeadowLIFE projects and include all stakeholders. This way if anyone has a question about the project (subsidies, contacts, requirements etc) they could easily get in contact with project managers.

A wider perspective would be to create a Facebook group for everyone associated with wooded meadows. They can be landowners, restorers, maintainers, neighbours or just regular people interested in wooded meadows. The group could be called *"Long live wooded meadows!"* and it would be purely managed by the people in the group. This can be used as a place to share experience, ask questions, invite to hike or help out etc. This could be implemented in both Estonia and Latvia.

Another use for social media could be to produce series of educational and practical videos in YouTube. These can be shared in other social media platforms as well and used for different target groups.

Informative materials (leaflets, direct mail etc)

As pointed out in the formats chapter, to decrease the burden on local land maintenance specialists, a conclusive and informative material (a leaflet) should be complied to landowners, restorers, and maintainers.

The material includes all essential information about the concept and importance of wooded meadows and specific information about the project, including project areas, needs and requirements for application and restoration works, contacts in local municipalities etc.

Public events

To raise public awareness, hosting public events should continue. There should be separate events for landowners, which have been done previously as well. In addition, there should be more events directed to the public to invite people to experience the wooded meadows firsthand. This way they can see the difference and importance in biodiversity with their own eyes. Organising joint events for the public, local communities and landowners will give a change for both target groups to get to know one another and how they operate. This means

the wide public and local communities can see how wooded meadows are restored and maintained, and who are the people doing the work. On the other hand, landowners can introduce their work and the importance of semi-natural habitats. Doing some hands-on activities together will help people connect and understand each other better.

A great way is to expand the collaboration with Open Farm Day, which are widely popular in Estonia, where people can spend a weekend visiting different farms and get acquainted with the life there. This can be expanded to wooded meadows, where people can gather, maybe help with some restoration (like Estonian Fund for Nature's nature conservation holidays which should also be a place for cooperation) and educate themselves on wooded meadows. This can also take place on already restored wooded meadows, where people can meet and learn about different species living on the habitat.

Media

In all activities, an important role is for traditional media. This includes national media channels; TV, radio, and newspapers, which are targeted mainly to public and passive landowners. Mass media is the channel to introduce the concept and raise awareness on the importance of wooded meadows.

However, equally important is the use of local media and newspapers, which are targeting mainly active landowners, restorers/maintainers, and local communities. This can be an informative channel for locals to firstly introduce wooded meadows and secondly keep them aware of the project areas, so restoration works won't alarm people living nearby.

Campaigns

Since the main goal for communication is to raise public awareness of the importance and value of wooded meadows, a large-scale campaign is something that should be taken into consideration as an activity. The campaign will deliver the messages to necessary target groups through all channels: general media, social media, events etc.

The main target group for the campaign is the public, to raise awareness and create a positive image and comprehensive value for wooded meadows.

9. Communication messages

The messages are divided into four categories, depending on the goal and target group. In addition, 7 main messages have been highlighted. Each message has sub-messages to explain the meaning of the umbrella messages more precisely. The messages are written in English, but also Estonian translation is provided, and Latvian messages are highlighted separately.

The communication messages are generalised ideas and conceptions that the specified stakeholders and target groups should understand and be aware of through the activities indicated by the communication action plan. The communication messages are the basis for messages of different campaigns and marketing slogans.

9.1. Communication messages in English

I The uniqueness and meaning of wooded meadows – wide public, communities, media

- **Estonian and Latvian wooded meadows are a unique habitat in the whole world**
  - One of the oldest habitats formed as a result of the interaction of man and nature, which today has disappeared almost everywhere.
  - The interaction between man and nature ensures biodiversity.
  - Apart from the Baltics, similar wooded meadows exist in the world only in central and southern Sweden and southern Finland.

- **Wooded meadows show the richness of Estonian/Latvian nature in the most authentic way**
  - Wooded meadows are regularly mowed (*only in Estonia*), grazed areas with natural herbaceous plants and sparsely located trees and shrubs.
  - At least one third of Estonian protected plant species can be found in wooded meadows.
  - The ecosystem of wooded meadows is very diverse, Estonian/Latvian wooded meadows contain nearly 60 different plant species per square meter. This makes Estonian/Latvian wooded meadows the most species rich habitats in the world with many more plant species on one square meter than Amazon Rainforest.

- **Biodiversity means in addition to richness in species also a balance between ecosystems**
  - Biological diversity aka biodiversity includes genetic and species diversity as well as diversity of habitats and ecosystems.
  - Biodiversity reflects how different species and habitats manage together, and therefore how high-quality our air, water or food is in the end.
  - Today, we face a situation where the decreasing biodiversity questions the future of humanity. So, its protection and preservation is not relevant only today, but everyday considering the life of future generations.
  - It is necessary to care for biodiversity, to offer protection and guidance. That's why for decades various bird, plant and animal species have been taken under

protection. As important is to protect and restore biodiverse wooded meadows.

II Project meaning and impact – all target groups

- **Wooded meadows are a part of cultural heritage and living environment, their preservation is wanted and achievable through the project**
    - Wooded meadow habitats have been a part of Estonian/Latvian nature for over 4000 years, but with the advent of the collective farms and industrial agriculture, the habitats started to perish.
    - In the last 80 years, the area of meadows has decreased significantly, this trend can be stopped by maintaining and restoring meadows
    - Wooded meadows are a part of our cultural heritage and identity, the restoration and maintenance gives an essential contribution to the preservation of cultural history.
    - The project prevents the extinction of wooded meadows and protects our species-rich and unique nature.

- **Wooded meadows are a part of our cultural heritage that we want to preserve and introduce to the world**
    - Wooded meadows are a part of cultural history and identity, their restoration and management is an important contribution to the awareness and preservation of our cultural history.
    - The preservation, protection and maintenace of wooded meadows belong in the list of UNESCO intangible cultural heritage and its high value should be introduced to the whole world.
    - Valuable knowledge and practices related to the maintenance of wooded meadows must be kept alive and passed on to future generations.

- **The goal of the WoodMeadowLIFE project is to help value and restore the wooded meadows of Estonia and Latvia as a unique part of the natural environment**
    - Wooded meadows can be preserved if they can maintain steadily and continuously and landowners have support in this.
    - It is feasible for Estonia to double the areas of restoration and maintenance of wooded meadows in Estonia and Latvia by 2027 (Estonia 2000ha and Latvia 992ha)
    - The project supports landowners and communities with subsidies and expertise to ensure the survival of wooded meadows. The European Union, environmental organizations, and the Environment Board are also putting in their support.

III Shared responsibility and cooperation in restoration – communities, local governments, landowners

- **Restored areas and active landowners maintain the species richness and uniqueness of our nature**

- Bringing together best practices and examples and inspiring other landowners
- Landowners who undertake restoration and regular maintenance, make an important contribution to preventing the extinction of wooded meadows and preserving Estonia's species richness

- **Restoring and maintaining wooded meadows requires a lot of responsibility, resources, and effort, but both the state and communities are supportive**
  - Restoration of wooded meadows is not only the responsibility and obligation of landowners, but a co-operation between everybody
  - It is work that values the environment and biodiversity, in which the people and communities of the region are ready to participate
  - The Environment Board and nature experts are ready to support the restorers of wooded meadows both financially and with know-how

IV Support for landowners – landowners

- **Applying for financial support is easy and understandable, the information is accessible and clear**
  - Providing guidance and support in both application and restoration; also personal counselling if necessary
  - Gathering the necessary information about contractors, instructions, and other helpful materials into a single channel

9.2. Communication messages in Estonia

I Puisniitude unikaalsus ja tähendus – lai avalikkus, kogukonnad, meedia

- **Eesti ja Läti puisniidud on ainulaadne kooslus terves maailmas**
  - Üks vanimatest inimese ja looduse koosmõju tulemusel tekkinud kooslustest, mis on tänaseks peaaegu kõikjalt kadunud.
  - Inimese ja looduse mõistlik koosmõju tagab elurikkuse.
  - Maailmas on peale Baltikumi taolised puisniidud laiemalt levinud veel ainult Kesk- ja Lõuna-Rootsis ja Lõuna-Soomes.
- **Puisniidud näitavad kõige ehedamalt Eesti looduse elurikkust**
  - Puisniidud on regulaarselt niidetavad looduslike rohttaimede ning hõredalt paiknevate puude ja põõsastega alad.
  - Puisniitudel leidub vähemalt kolmandik meie kaitstavatest taimeliikidest.
  - Puisniitude elustik on väga mitmekesine, Eesti puisniitudel leidub ühel ruutmeetril erinevaid taimeliike ligi 60. See tõstab Eesti puisniidud maailma taimekoosluste seas esimeste sekka, olles liigirikkam, kui näiteks Amazonase vihmametsad.
- **Elurikkus tähendab lisaks liigirikkusele ka tasakaalu ökosüsteemide vahel**
  - Bioloogiline mitmekesisus ehk elurikkus hõlmab nii geneetilist, liigilist kui ka elupaikade ja ökosüsteemide mitmekesisust.

- Elurikkus peegeldab, kuidas erinevad liigid ja kooslused koostoimes hakkama saavad ning seega, kui kvaliteetne on lõppkokkuvõttes ka meie õhk, vesi või toidulaud.
- Oleme täna olukorras, kus kahanev elurikkus seab küsimärgi alla inimkonna tuleviku. Seega on selle kaitsmine ja hoidmine oluline mitte ainult tänase, vaid ka kõikide tulevaste põlvede elu silmas pidades.
- Elurikkuse eest on vaja hoolitseda, teda kaitsta ja suunata. Nii on juba aastakümneid kaitse all erinevad linnu-, taime- ja loomaliigid ning niisamuti vajalik on kaitsta ja taastada elurikkaid puisniite.

II Projekti tähendus ja oluline mõju – kõik

- **Puisniidud on osa meie elukeskkonnast, mida soovime ja saame projekti abil hoida**
  - Puisniitude kooslused on Eestimaa looduse osa olnud üle 4000 aasta, nõukogude aja kolhooside ja tööstusliku põllumajanduse tulekuga hakkasid kooslused hävima.
  - Viimased 80 aasta on niitude pindala oluliselt vähenenud, saame selle trendi peatada hooldades ja taastades puisniite.
  - Projekt väärab puisniitude väljasuremisohu ning kaitseb meie liigirikast ja ainulaadset loodust.

- **Puisniidud on osa meie kultuuripärandist, mida tahame hoida ning kogu maailmale tutvustada**
  - Puisniidud on meie kultuuriloo ja identiteedi osa, nende taastamine ja hooldamine on oluline panus meie kultuuriloo teadvustamisse ja talletamisse.
  - Puisniitude hoidmisel, kaitsmisel ja hooldamisel on koht UNESCO vaimse kultuuripärandi nimekirjas ning sedavõrd väärtuslik, et seda kogu maailmale tutvustada.
  - Puisniitude hoidmisega seotud väärtuslikke teadmisi ja tavasid tuleb hoida elus ning edasi kanda järgmistele põlvkondadele.

- **WOODMEADOWLIFE projekti eesmärk on aidata väärtustada ja taastada Eesti ja Läti puisniite kui ainulaadset looduskeskkonna osa**
  - Suudame puisniidud säilitada, kui suudame neid püsivalt ja pidevalt hooldada ning toetame selles maaomanikke.
  - Eestile on jõukohane aastaks 2027 kahekordistada puisniitude taastamise ja hooldamise alasid Eestis ja Lätis (Eestis 2000 ha ja Lätis 992 ha).
  - Projekt toetab raha ja teadmistega maaomanike ja kogukondi, et puisniidud püsiksid. Oma õla paneb alla Euroopa Liit, keskkonnaorganisatsioonid, keskkonnaamet.

III Ühine vastutus ja koostöö taastamisel – kogukonnad, kohalikud omavalitused, maaomanikud

- **Taastatud alad ja tegusad maaomanikud hoiavad meie looduse liigirikkust ja ainulaadsust**
    - Koondame parimad praktikad ja näited ning inspireerime sellega teisi maaomanikke.
    - Taastamise ette võtnud ja regulaarselt hooldavad maaomanikud annavad olulise panuse puisniitude hääbumise ärahoidmiseks ja Eesti liigirikkuse säilitamiseks.

- **Puisniitude taastamine ja hooldamine nõuab palju vastutust, ressurssi ja vaeva, kuid nii riik kui kogukonnad on toeks**
    - Puisniitude taastamine ei ole ainult maaomanike vastutus ja kohustus, vaid koostöö.
    - Tegemist on keskkonda ja elurikkust väärtustava tööga, milles on valmis kaasa lööma piirkonna inimesed ja kogukonnad (talgud).
    - Keskkonnaamet ning looduseksperdid on valmis toetama puisniitude taastajaid nii rahaliselt kui *know-how* teadmisega.

IV Tugi maaomanikele – maaomanikud

- **Toetuste taotlemine on lihtne ja arusaadav ning info kättesaadav ja selge**
    - Juhendame ja oleme toeks nii taotlemisel kui taastamisel, tagame vajadusel personaalse nõustamise.
    - Koondame vajaliku info töövõtjate, vajalike juhiste, abistavate materjalide kohta keksesse kanalisse.

9.3. Communication messages in Latvia

I Parkveidu pļavu īpašā būtība un nozīme – plašākā sabiedrībā, kopienās, medijos.

- **Igaunijas un Latvijas parkveida pļavas ir īpašs biotops visā pasaulē.**
    - Vecākās kopienas veidojās no cilvēka un dabas mijiedarbības, kas šodien ir izzudis teju visur.
    - Neskaitot Igaunijas un Latvijas parkveida pļavas, pasaulē tās ir sastopamas vien Zviedrijas centrālajā un dienvidu daļā un Somijas dienvidos.

- **Parkveida pļavas parāda Igaunijas un Latvijas dabas bagātību tās plašākajā mērogā.**
    - Parkveida pļavas ir regulāri pļautas platības ar dabīgiem lakstaugiem un reti izvietotiem kokiem un krūmiem.
    - Viena trešdaļa no aizsargājamajām augu sugām ir sastopamas tieši parkveida pļavās.
    - Parkveida pļavu ekosistēma ir ļoti daudzveidīgs. Igaunijas un Latvijas parkveida pļavās uz kvadrātmetru ir gandrīz 60 dažādas augu sugas. Tādējādi Igaunijas un Latvijas parkveida pļavas ir vienas no augu sugu bagātākajām vidēm pasaulē.

II Projekta nozīme – visi

- **Parkveida pļavas ir daļa no mūsu kultūras un dabas mantojuma, ko vēlamies un varam saglabāt.**
    - Parkveida pļavas ir Igaunijas un Latvijas dabas sastāvdaļa jau vairāk nekā 4000 gadu, bet līdz ar padomju laika kolhozu parādīšanos, tās sāka iznīcināt.
    - Pēdējo 80 gadu laikā pļavu platības ir samazinājušās 1000 reizes, šo tendenci varam apturēt, saglabājot un atjaunojot pļavas.
    - Parkveida pļavas ir neatņemama mūsu kultūras un identitātes daļa. To atjaunošana un uzturēšana ir būtisks ieguldījums kultūrvēstures saglabāšanā.
    - Projekts novērš parkveida pļavu izzušanu un aizsargā mūsu bioloģiski bagāto un unikālo dabu.

- **Parkveida pļavas ir daļa no mūsu kultūrvēstures mantojuma, ko mēs vēlamies saglabāt un ar ko iepazīstināt citus pasaulē**
    - Parkveida pļavas ir daļa no mūsu kultūrvēstures un identitātes. To atjaunošana un uzturēšana ir svarīgs solis mūsu kultūrvēstures saglabāšanai un labākai pazīšanai.
    - Parkveida pļavu saglabāšana, aizsargāšana un uzturēšana ir iekļauta UNESCO nemateriālo kultūrmantojumu sarakstā, no ar to vērtība būtu jāiepazīstina visa pasaule.
    - Parkveida pļavu uzturēšanas zināšanas un darbi ir jāuztur dzīvi un jānodod nākamajām paaudzēm.

- **WoodMeadowLIFE projekta mērķis ir palīdzēt novērtēt un atjaunot unikālās un dabīgās parkveida pļavas Igaunijā un Latvijā.**
    - Mēs varam saglabāt parkveida pļavas, ja spējam tās pastāvīgi un nepārtraukti kopt un tajā atbalstīt zemes īpašniekus.
    - Igaunijā un Latvijā ir iespējams dubultot parkveida pļavu atjaunošanas un kopšanas platības līdz 2027. gadam (Igaunijā 2000ha un Latvijā 992ha)
    - Projekta atbalsts sniedz vitāli svarīgo pieredzi un naudas līdzekļus, lai nodrošinātu parkveida pļavu izdzīvošanu. Savu atbalstu sniedz arī Eiropas Savienība, vides organizācijas un Valsts vides dienests.

III Dalīta atbildība un sadarbība restaurācijā – sabiedrība, pašvaldības, zemes īpašnieki

- **Atjaunotās teritorijas un aktīvie zemes īpašnieki uztur mūsu dabas bagātību un unikalitāti.**
    - Mēs apkopojam labākos piemērus un darbus un iedvesmojam citus zemes īpašniekus.
    - Zemes īpašnieki, kas uzņemas parkveida pļavu atjaunošanu un to regulāru kopšanu, palīdz novērst parkveida pļavu izmiršanu un saglabāt dabas bagātīgo daudzveidību.

- **Parkveida pļavu atjaunošana un uzturēšana prasa lielu atbildību, resursus un pūles, taču gan valsts, gan sabiedrība to atbalsta.**

- Parkveida pļavu atjaunošana ir ne tikai zemes īpašnieku atbildība un pienākums, bet visas sabiedrības kopīgais uzdevumus.
- Tas ir vidi un bioloģisko daudzveidību novērtējošs darbs, ikkatram jebkur ir iespēja tajā piedalīties.
- Dabas fonds un dabas eksperti ir gatavi atbalstīt parkveida pļavu atjaunotājus gan finansiāli, gan ar zināšanām.

IV Atbalsts zemes īpašniekiem – zemes īpašniekiem

- **Pieteikšanās atbalstam nav birokrātiska, un informācija ir viegli pieejama un skaidra**
  - Sniedzam norādījumus un atbalstu gan pielietošanā, gan restaurācijā, nepieciešamības gadījumā sniedzam privātas konsultācijas.
  - Mēs apkopojam nepieciešamo un lietderīgo informāciju vienviet – strādnieku kontaktus, instrukcijas un citus materiālus.

10. Action plan

The communication action plan consists of proposed activities in accordance with the findings of the communication strategy. Majority of activities can be modified according to Estonian or Latvian circumstances, if not written otherwise in activity description. Specific activities are for the first year (2023) of the communication strategy, second year (2024) has some activities, but onwards a detailed actions plan cannot be done so much in advance, and it should be updated continuously according to at the time media and society status.

As indicated in the Introduction, communication of WoodMeadowLIFE at international scale will also take place through the Replication Plan coordinated by SERE Europe. The plan will be coordinated by a permanent working group of experts and practitioners, for the duration of WoodMeadowLIFE project.

The work group will conduct and convey the project restoration learnings that can be replicated elsewhere in a wider type of sylvopasture/agroforestry habitats and will follow up the success of these replication efforts. The replication work group will drive and adapt the most suitable activities to achieve results as the projects develops and concentrate the main efforts towards the end of it.

The main actions initially planned for the replication plan include, amongst others: a database of replicable project components; training activities targeting replicators, a European replications map of replicators and replication sites, and specific publications as a primer and a best practice guide. Together with other projects a SERE Restoration Replication Forum is also planned.

The detailed action plan for 2023 can be found in Appendix 4. An overview of the main communication activities is visualised in the timeline below.

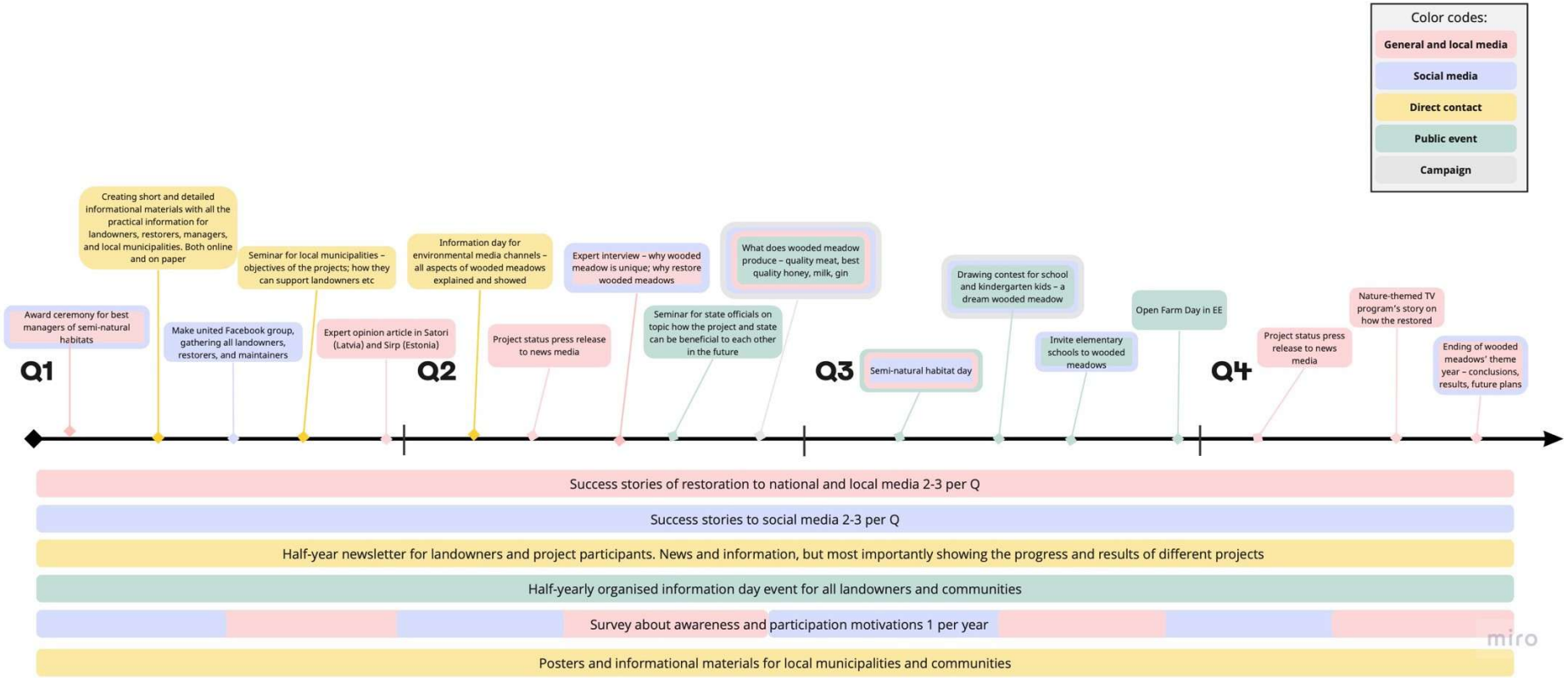

Figure 4. Key communication activities for 2023 in a timeline

Appendix 1 - Situation analysis

This chapter presents short overview of the content and activity of the webpage, social media channels and media coverage. In addition, summarises the lessons from previous activities and seminars.

Media coverage

Media publications were searched and analysed during a period of one year (15.09.2021-15.09.2022) to find out the type, tonality, and topics of publications of the project and the subject of wooded meadows. Also, to find and determine who are the potential spokespersons and opinion leaders on that matter.

During the analysed period, the word "wooded meadow" (in its different forms) came out altogether in 416 publications. Although mostly by just mentions, in lists and by passing. Thus, big part of the publications is not covering wooded meadows in a meaningful way that would talk specifically about wooded meadows, their properties, value or restoration.

Project WoodMeadowLIFE

The project was covered using its official name only altogether 13 times. WoodMeadowLIFE was used in 5 of them and PuisniiduLIFE (the project name in Estonian) added 8 publications. All publications with project name in Estonian were about the map-application that shows all semi-natural habitats in Estonia on a map. WoodMeadowLIFE project is mentioned there as the project areas will be available to see on the map. Out of the publications, only 2 can be counted as organic publications. From total, 2 were press release publications in local Newswire site BNS (Baltic News Service), available only to Estonian biggest media houses, but were not picked up by any channel. 2 publications (one from online, one from paper version) came from an opinion article piece written by the project manager herself and one publication from the environmentally focused Bioneer.ee talking about the official program and its goals.

In Latvia, the results of publications are quite similar. The project name gives out 6 publications. From them 3 are local Newswire publications that were not picked up by the media. Other 3 publications are from Valka local news.

"Wooded meadows" and "restoring"

To find more meaningful publications talking about wooded meadows, restoration, maintenance, and the project itself without mentioning the name, publications connected with the phrase "restore" and "wooded meadow" with their different forms were also analysed.

During the analyses period there were altogether 42 publications that covered wooded meadows and their restoration in a more meaningful way. Estonia does not have many

environmental specific media channels, but basically all of them (Bioneer.ee, Delfi Roheportaal, Osoon, Metsamees, Eesti Loodus) had covered the subject.

Bigger part of the publications came from local newspapers that covered the topic in a local setting and showing the results of some local area restoration. Although national media had some publications, local newspapers had more in-depth and comprehensive coverage concerning the restoration of wooded meadows.

It is worth mentioning that local publications of islands were especially active on writing about the project and wooded meadows. This is also partly logical because Saaremaa has the biggest proportion of project lands. Although the proportion is much smaller on Estonian second biggest island Hiiumaa, the local newspaper Hiiu Leht had all in all the biggest number of publications (4) out of all the media channels. In addition to written publications there were also two pieces of coverage from TV (Osoon, Laser) and two radio coverage pieces (Vikerraadio, Kuku Raadio).

In Latvia, the general term of "wooded meadow" was mentioned 30 times in various contexts. Considering the higher number of publications in Estonia, but at the same time considerably smaller project area in Latvia, this result could be considered average.

Focus and topics

The focus of the coverage was mainly on two topics: the restoration process in some local setting and stories connected to the State Forest Management Centre (*from now on RMK*) official announcement of auctions and land renting and other official notices (new map application for meadows added, best eco-producer announced, RMK is organising a hike etc). Stories were mostly positive and not so focused on the problems or challenges, but the results or already ongoing process of restoration.

Social media analysis

The WoodMeadowLIFE project is in Estonia represented through the *Eesti pärandniidud* Facebook page, which has over 220 followers.

Post frequency is 5 posts a month on average. The biggest positive irregularity is May 2022, when *Eesti pärandniidud* page had 14 posts. Posts have on average 17-23 likes and only few posts have comments. Sometimes the comment is the page adding the photo author's name and account. Few posts also have shares. These quantitative statistics show that the posts are not engaging the followers.

Main topics covered on social media are activities (invitations to participate, the summaries of different celebrations, excursions, participation in conferences etc), sharing different pictures from semi-natural habitats around Estonia (showing different angles and visuals of nature, birds, animals), sharing relevant posts from partners channels (Estonian Fund for Nature, Environmental Board) and sharing findings and wisdom of meadows and their management (e.g., where to find cowslips, how to preserve and what to do with them).

In Latvia the semi-natural habitats topic and the campaign within the project GrassLIFE is covered through the Latvian Fund for Nature (*Latvijas Dabas fonds*) Facebook page and there has not been a focused or separate social media communication regarding wooded meadows. At the same time the GrassLIFE campaign* is visible and engaging
*(Some activities done under the project GrassLIFE campaign: Compiling and sharing comprehensive information material about all the healing herbs that can be found on different semi-natural meadows; Mobile herd. Landowners could request a mobile herd to come to their meadow area to graze on it; Research and knowledge sharing: Giving an opportunity to get people involved by making a "My meadow commitment". For example, learning about 10 endangered species, listening to a meadow bird song, telling 5 friends about meadows etc.)

Other sources

The analysis also includes the recording of the award ceremony for managers of semi-natural habitats and the following seminar. Covered here are some more prominent opinions and relevant commentary of the participants about the general situation of joining the project and continuing with the maintenance of the meadow areas.

Prominent was the question of how to sustain the maintenance activities in the long run and make the land economically self-sustainable also without the subsidies and when not using the land as a grazing area. What would be the other options to have the land maintained but also use it for some other kind of income. So, the main worry for target groups was monetary.
"Maintaining the land with machinery is difficult. So, 75% of these meadows are maintained by animals. That makes it financially reasonable. And there could be even more animals on these areas. But if you don't have animals..."

Another financial concern was about the difference of subsidies between natural grassland and land that is intensely used for agriculture. It is much more profitable and less hassle to use the same land for farming. In addition, the fact that if somebody is managing the meadow land as a private person, they immediately have to pay taxes, which is not conducive to joining the project if they just own the land and are not doing much with it.

A feeling was expressed that bureaucracy and paperwork are probably not a big problem for those who have already joined the project. But for new people it might be daunting, because other similar activities/projects require a lot of paperwork. A notion was conveyed that it might happen that a few older landowners might feel offended by the notion of being told what to do on their land that they have taken care of for a long time.
"I'm convinced that the project extends 90% through previous participants and not new people. The paperwork and new knowledge to be acquired is just too much for a newbie."

Lessons from previous activities

During interviews and meetings with the stakeholders and target groups emerged their experiences, impressions, and lessons from already done activities.

Their experience found that regular notification, like e-mail invites, might not be the best way to attract landowners to participate in information seminars. More effective is to have direct communication (phone calls, face-to-face) with landowners. This attracts landowners to find out more, take a more active interest and potentially join the project. It establishes a good contact between landowner and managing organisation. The seminars and training are also essential for networking, which establishes good contact between landowners, restorers/maintainers, project team and land maintenance specialists.

The title given to wooded meadows as the Latvian "Habitat of the Year" was a success and brought a lot of attention to the wooded meadows. Since in 2023, wooded meadows will be the theme of the year also in Estonia, it might be reasonable if some of these activities from Latvia could be implemented in Estonia as well. Landscape reading tour experience turned out to be great and popular. There was a hike on nature areas with experts talking about biodiversity, nature, and culture. Afterwards picnic and a concert on a wooded meadow.

One great example of held activities is Estonian Fund for Nature's nature conservation holidays, where volunteers, participants and group managers work together to improve the living conditions of a certain species or maintenance semi-natural habitats. These holidays have proven to raise communities' awareness of the importance of wooded meadows in new areas.

In Latvia, the project GrassLIFE (www.grasslife.lv) about the semi-natural habitats, including wooded meadows was considered successful. The campaign had several activities - an entertaining and creative part, at the same time educational part about semi-natural habitats and their value, and a practical part where people could contribute themselves.

Appendix 2 – Expectations of partners

To map partners' expectations for communication activities, in-depth interviews were conducted with the main partners of the project as the main stakeholders named by the Environmental Board. The interviewees were representatives of the Environmental Board, Estonian Seminatural Community Conservation Association, Estonian Fund for Nature, University of Tartu and The Latvian Fund for Nature. The goal for the interviews was to map the partners' roles and co-operation, their opinions of knowledge and communications so far and expectations on objectives, channels and activities for future communication.

Roles, co-operation, and project communication

The partners mainly know their role in the project and what their activities and responsibilities are. Generally, everyone's happy with the co-operation, its frequency and channels. Everyone acknowledges their area of expertise, the activities for the project have been divided between partners.

So far, communication has been made mostly on the main partner side, the Environmental Board. The contribution to communication activities from different partners has been relatively low. However, the interviews identified that partners have the readiness to contribute more to communication activities via their channels and contacts (social media, mailing lists, events etc.).
"We're willing to contribute more to communication activities, but don't have the input."

For the stakeholders, the main target groups that emerged from all interviews were landowners, restorers/maintainers, local communities, and the public. These were mentioned in every interview, they were ranked in different orders, but landowners or restorers/maintainers were always ranked as the most important target group.

Almost all interviewees iterated that the main risk endangering the project's success is finding enough landowners to participate for the purpose of restoring 700 ha of wooded meadows. The second risk brought out was the forest-conflict and how the public might see the restoration as deforestation, and this might bring negative attention to the project and wooded meadows in general.
"The whole project stands on getting landowners on board."
"Charisma will help us win over landowners."

Getting the landowners to be knowledgeable of the project and introducing the benefits of wooded meadows is just the beginning. Joining the project needs a long commitment from the managers and landowners and that might be another big risk. Therefore it is also important to find project participants whose main motivation would be the restoration and preservation of the habitat, not money or something else.
"Landowners might not be ready to take on a 20-year maintenance commitment."

In Latvia, the project is led by the Latvian Fund for Nature. Their biggest goal is getting landowners to join. Co-operation is done mostly with farmers. It was expressed that the fund

must also cope with the Ministry of Agriculture not supporting the restoration and preservation of semi-natural habitats, therefore not the project as well. As the ministry does not represent sufficiently the farmers that are farming on semi-natural grasslands, and favour the more intensive farming, instead. Also, the industrial farmer associations do not support the idea of semi-natural grassland management as they see more benefit in using the land for agriculture. On the other hand, it is supported by farmers who own and already manage semi-natural habitats.

Assessment to awareness and communication

All interviewees point out that the knowledge of this LIFE project is not widely spread. Mostly the landowners/managers, who are actively preserving meadows (also outside the project) are aware of it and whether they have land on project areas as well. Many landowners who have land on project areas have gotten an e-mail about the project and its opportunities, but if they're not active in the field, the info is often overlooked.
"Landowners might not be aware that they have even a wooded meadow."

In Latvia, the general awareness was considered also quite low as lots of landowners didn't know that their land was in the past or could be a wooded meadow. Thanks to the public campaigns awareness has risen.

The channels of communication so far have been information seminars, direct contact, and press releases to media. With landowners, the contact is mainly direct, through seminars and trainings. There is also *Eesti Pärandniidud* Facebook page and homepage of the project. In addition, international communication from stakeholders to share and learn from own and others experience on an international level.

However, all project partners recognized that the project is still in early starting phase, so bigger communication activities are still ahead.
"Wooded meadow is not very known in the public; the project could start changing that."

In Latvia, there aren't many landowners, so most of the communication is done directly. Over the phone, but within the project GrassLIFE mostly through a WhatsApp group that connects many landowners. In the group, landowners themselves can ask questions, share their experiences, communicate quickly and without formalities.
"We started with the base – explained the value of these ecosystems. The feeling that "wow, this really is something that can disappear if we don't do something". Secondly the campaign focused on increasing the knowledge. And thirdly, we added practicality. Also, a way for people to contribute themselves. For example, we had shopping lists: I will get honey collected from semi-natural grasslands, milk from these cows grazing there etc."
"We also had seminars, events on the meadows, concerts."

Since the project areas are quite large and all over Estonia, the interviewees feel that it's also important to engage local communities, who live next to wooded meadows, and who will see the tracks and mud that might come along with the restoration. The aim is to have locals understand the importance of wooded meadow and how the "visually not so beautiful" scene is temporary and a means to achieve restored wooded meadow.

"The bigger risk arrives when the restoration works begin."
"This is necessary to have the birds and butterflies."

Expectations regarding communication objectives, channels, activities

Partners brought out in their interviews, that although landowners are important for the project to succeed and to gather necessary areas in the project, great part of our audience to whom we need to direct communication activities is the public. The communication activities should create a positive public opinion and value for wooded meadows.
"*When you think of wooded meadows, you think of beautiful, species rich Estonian nature."*
"Wooded meadows should be as normal in Estonian nature as bogs and forests."

In Latvia they found after the communication activities that an additional opinion leader group could also be families with kids. As such the communication goals should also align with this: the value of preserving the heritage and how it gives greener future and better food for our kids.
"Families want their children to eat products that come from this clean land and live in the future where we still have biodiversity and these nice meadows to walk around."

Since the restoration might not have a great visual appeal, more local people and communities should be engaged in the process to avoid unhappy residents living next to wooded meadows. To prepare people to get through the visually unpleasant part to have beautiful restored wooded meadows.
„*We need to start positive communication before negative comes and ruins it."*
„We cannot forget the locals who will see the not so pretty restoration process."

In the opinion of stakeholders, the communication channels with landowners must be personal. Face-to-face meetings and direct phone calls are most effective and will get the most landowners on board. However, with local communities, also local newspapers must be used, because people living in the neighbourhoods and nearby, retrieve majority of the information from local news.
"*Rarely e-mails got the people there, but calling all landowners (e.g., in Kihnu) made them join the seminar."*

For public, many channels must be used for communication activities. In addition to traditional media, also social media. To raise public awareness a larger-scale campaign should take place.
"People must realise that wooded meadow restoration is not forest clearcutting."
"The success of the project depends on how well the value of wooded meadows is made clear to both landowners and the public."

In the last 100 years, the number of wooded meadows in Estonia has rapidly decreased. However, there are people who remember greatly the benefits that having wooded meadows brought to everyday life, they just don't acknowledge it.
"People don't pay attention that there isn't as much birdsong as 30 years ago if their attention is not brought to it."

The partners' conclusion is that, to create a positive image for wooded meadows in the public, there's a need for a "subconscious influence", to remind older people and introduce to younger people what should be normal in terms of nature. An idea to activate the public on the importance of wooded meadows, is to bring their attention on the things that were "normal" a few decades ago, but nowhere to be found anymore. It should be something simple and easily understandable for everyone. However, the message shouldn't be about restoring something as it once was, but to ensure habitat for the future for all species.
„Ask people if they remember when was the last time they collected globeflowers."

Partners expressed the belief that landowners will listen to someone of their own kind, also a landowner or restorer/manager. The best options would be people who are owning land on the project area and are at the same time restoring and managing the meadows themselves. They should have experience from the perspective of a landowner, so other landowners have the possibility to identify with them.
"Landowners might not listen to women "from the city"."

Partners believe the general public might listen to scientists and authorities who clearly have knowledge and expertise in the questions at hand. For this, interviewees named Jaak-Albert Metsoja and Aveliina Helm (named in every interview), who speaks in a simple, understandable way, she's an active social media user and might be influential to younger audience as well. In addition, the public will listen to famous people, who have shown their interest in nature, biodiversity etc. They can also come across as trustworthy and believable sources when talking about the importance and value of wooded meadows.
"Use young photographers to show the beauty of woodmeadows in a different angle."

In Latvia, the sceptics are perceived to be industrial farmer associations and farmers who would like to use the land for more intensive agriculture. Supporters are city people who own some land in the project area and support green initiatives and families with kids.
"Some groups have been using the war in Ukraine as an excuse for more intensification of agriculture, scaring people with food shortages"
"It is very important to repeat to the landowners how valuable and important is their work, because their actions contribute to the wellbeing of all others, animals and nature. They need to feel valued!"

Appendix 3 – Expectations of target groups

As target group representatives, the interviewees were a landowner, restorer/manager, local community representative and local government representative. From Latvia also landowner and restorer/manager. Goal of the interviews was to map the target groups motivations, co-operation with stakeholders, target groups opinions and communications so far as well as expectations, objectives, channels, and activities for communication going forward.

Co-operation and assessment of implementation

Almost all target group members expressed that the most important motivation in joining and being part of the project for them and other people is subjective and comes from their inner values. They have a personal historical connection with the area, they want to restore it as they remembered the place as a kid or just feel that this could be their contribution to the environment or making their home nicer.

"From this work I have found myself a calling. This is my motivation. It has a huge value that we have these unique ecosystems in Europe and the world. Others must restore wooded meadows from farmlands, but we still have something left from the past."

"This also finally gives a reason to own a land that is under protection."

"I want the land to look like in my memory as the family farm. The area was put into a poem, and I want it to look like it was described in the poem."

The goals and motivations of the target group members often align, but also evolve with time and experience. If the motivation is to restore their childhood homes, then after getting familiar with the project and seeing the results, they get motivated to raise their goals. For restoring even a bigger part of the land and to motivate neighbours and others to also participate in the project. A great motivation is to see the work done by others as properly as they have done it.

Interviews revealed that another goal is to introduce the process and results of the restoring also to the general public for education purposes. One important aspect is the unique species rich ecosystem that this creates, but also that this form of cutting trees is not harmful to the environment. Several target group members pointed out that an important goal should be to raise awareness and tolerance of local communities and especially people who have moved to the countryside more recently. As they have often shown to have the biggest negative impact in landowners joining the project. They have a strong belief that any kind of tree cutting is bad for the environment. They are vocal about it and also influence others around it and in some cases actively impede the project works by restricting access through their land.

*"The biggest problem is with the new people who move outside the city. They have their 0,5ha of land and think they know what's best for the environment. If they are also deeply green (*into environmentalism*) that's the worst! But if they stay over a couple of cold winters, then they start to understand reason. They need to heat their home."*

Co-operation with project partners and stakeholders is generally considered good from the target groups that are already part of the project. They evaluated that with them the

communication has been clear, and their questions have been answered fast and efficiently. Especially when they compare the communication with other support schemes for land management. They feel there are enough meetings and groups to get all the necessary information. Sometimes some landowners have a feeling that they know better the land they have worked for 40 years and don't want to listen to other people coming from outside. But this feeling usually goes away the longer they are participating in the project.

"I have the local office of the officials actually quite nearby. I can always step in there and get a warm welcome and useful info. It's not overly formal."

The restorers/managers see a big benefit of having a good co-operation with an active local land maintenance specialist. If they have done a good groundwork of explaining and introducing the project or generally the restoring of meadows, then the landowners are more likely to join in.

"Environmental Board had previously done a very good job of introducing the benefits of these kind of projects and showing results. So, when we called the landowners later, we did not have to start explaining from scratch. We also had a much bigger number of landowners joining."

The target groups had some complaints towards the co-operation with local governments and communities. The reason lies more in the fact that sometimes to get to one land the restorer/manager must cross many other lands. Sometimes the access roads are not well maintained, and sometimes private owners don't want to allow the machinery to go over their land. For reasons of not wanting the road destroyed or more, because they see the restoring activity as just usual cutting down the forest and can't see the benefit of the project. The co-operation could be better in a way that the local government would handle and manage more the problems of accessing some areas. Because the restoring of the areas would also be beneficial to them.

"Sometimes it's not clear at all, also for the local government, how to even get the machinery to the plot. And sometimes there is a city-person-moved-to-the-countryside who has gone a bit crazy and closes their little part of road. Generally, we get things sorted out, but the local government could do more and be more supportive."

Not connected to the communication and co-operation, but worth mentioning is the fact that target groups felt that also affecting the project negatively is the lack of support money. They feel that it is 'kind of okay' if the landowner does the restoration and maintenance work themselves, but if there is a need to buy in other services, it becomes financially unprofitable. They also felt the amount of support was put into place some time ago, but it doesn't reflect today's circumstances and prices.

"There should be a coefficient that takes into account inflation and the general price range."
"Thanks to the support money I restored and am able to keep maintenance, but I make nothing from it and don't have to pay on top myself either. I'm at zero. This means I do everything out of my own motivation."

The Latvian target group representative added that they are extremely happy with the co-operation with the project partners so far and are pleased with all their communications, general awareness building and campaigns. The biggest worry for them was the activity of the Latvian State Forest Company who also had some meadows restored in the neighbourhood.

But the quality of the work was not good, and left a negative impression to others of the community about the activities of restoring wooded meadows.

Assessment to awareness and communication

The people in the target group who are already participating in the project are highly knowledgeable about the project, but admit, that the knowledge of the wide public and other landowners is rather poor. Those who have heard something about it, usually know only generally about the restoration of meadows, but not specifically wooded meadows. The ones who are more knowledgeable are the neighbours and community members of areas where some of the restoration has already been done and results can be seen.

"Today most of the landowners don't know much about it. Even I, although I'm participating in the project, don't know to tell you about what the exact hectare goals of the project are."

"I have so far never had a situation when I call a landowner and he already knows about the project."

Poor knowledge and awareness are also evident by the fact that the high-level local government representative had almost no knowledge about the specific project. He knew generally about restoring of semi-natural habitats, but only through the restorations of coastal meadows in the area. Although to him the awareness of the benefits and results of restoring meadows was well-known and understandable. The local government itself has a high number of WoodMeadowLIFE project areas in their administrative area.

"It is probably known to the environmental specialist because we are not the initiators of these activities. This comes from the Environmental Board side."

"It's a matter of priorities and money. At the moment we have our focus on restoring rivers."

The restoring of the coastal meadows is very visible. People notice it because it opens up the views on the sea. Also important for the tourists. It's good that the pastures are being restored and it gives the notion of what a more diverse nature looks like."

Although generally the communication to date is believed to be good, the target group members have no specific knowledge what has been done for communication. They see the results and for them the fact that landowners' and public's knowledge is more on the poor side, says that communication can be improved.

"We have also at the moment kind of a change of generations. So, I like that the knowledge of young people is high and that they have targeted them with courses and activities about the meadows, biodiversity etc."

In Latvia, the target group representative is pleased with the active communication so far and the activities of the GrassLIFE project. The campaign has involved not only local communities, but also people from cities who have come to the events and concerts organised on the semi-natural meadow areas. Landowners appreciate that the general public has been involved although it still takes work to raise general awareness.

"I believe the target group is very well aware of the project, because there are not a lot of them anyways. The general public not so much yet."

Expectations regarding communication objectives, channels, activities

All the target group members agreed that further communication is needed and especially towards the landowners. Although they admitted the amount of support money will not always guarantee the desired profitability, the inner motivations on the matter weigh more. But it is hard to know the precise motives of each landowner.
"It's a matter of sales work. You need to sell the idea to them. Unfortunately, one buys their car because of the colour and other looks at the engine."

The general census was that it is very important to communicate to the landowners the benefit to the nature and the whole area and community. More focus should be on showing and advertising the results of the work done so far and finished project areas. The visuals, impression and feeling you get when visiting wooded meadows should be an important part of the communication.
"Important part is also to communicate that this is a way to use the land that is otherwise under protection. People think that they can't do anything there, but they can. This is an additional source of income when living on the countryside."

Some also found that the focus of the communication should be quite directly on the landowners, and there is no need to invest in the informing of the general public.
"The direct communication with the landowners could be through calling and then quarterly newsletters where they can see the progress, what has been done, good examples. If the owner sees the value that his land has and sees what it is now and what it could become, that would help. Also, to know how many others have joined the projects. It's easier to join others than to go in alone."

The target group found that probably the best way to reach landowners is still through direct communication and through their peers, using direct calls, mailing lists or Facebook groups. Other landowners and their restored meadows are the best influencers.
"Similarities attract. Landowner listens to another landowner. Exchanging experiences is the best method."

The conclusions for general public and local communities were the same: the most important thing is to provide real life experience. For example, organising Open Farm Day is a great opportunity. If people experience what it feels like to gather mushrooms, herbs, and other goods they will come later anyway.

In Latvia, one of the communication channels with the landowners and amongst themselves in the project GrassLIFE is organised through WhatsApp project landowners' group. So far it has worked very well for fast and personal communication. Latvian Nature Fund has been doing a great job so far and they are also considered as a good opinion leader and spokesperson for the project.

Appendix 4 – Detailed action plan

Key activities that should be implemented are highlighted in action plan with blue cells. All other activities should be taken into consideration if they fit the scope and budget of communication activities for the project.

In addition, it would be beneficial to meet up with other LIFE projects when planning communication activities. This way some activities could be done in collaboration.

Each activity has been marked which communication strategy goal it fulfils. Every goal is given an acronym to simplify the table.

Goal	***Abbreviation***
Raise general awareness	*General awareness*
Raise landowner awareness	*Landowners awareness*
Raise motivation of interested landowners and support them	*Landowners motivation*
Increase co-operation between landowners, restorers and maintainers	*Landowners, restorers, maintainers co-op*
Establish efficient co-operation with municipalities and local communities	*Co-op with municipalities and communities*
Improve co-operation between landowners and the state	*Co-op state*

Table 3. Simplified acronyms for communication goals.

Time	Activity	Target group	Channel	Goals
Continuous activities throughout 2023				
	Success stories of restoration to national and local media 2-3 per Q	General public, landowners	National and local media	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation
	Success stories to social media 2-3 per Q	General public, landowners	General and local media, social media	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation
	Updating homepage for user-friendliness	Landowners, restorers/ maintainers, local municipalities	Homepage and social media	General awareness; landowners motivation
	Creating picture and video materials from good case studies	All target groups	Homepage, media, social media	General awareness; landowners motivation
	Twice per year newsletter for landowners and project participants. News and information, but most importantly showing the progress and results of different projects (in Estonia, this and other activities can be done in collab. with Loodusrikas Eesti project)	Landowners (active and passive)	Direct contact	Landowners motivation; landowners, restorers and maintainers co-op
	Half-yearly organised information day event for all landowners and communities	Landowners, local communities	Public events (web as well)	Landowners awareness; landowners motivation, co-op with municipalities and communities
	Survey about awareness and participation motivations 1 per year	General public, local communities	Media, social media	General awareness
	Posters and informational materials for local municipalities and communities	Local communities, municipality	Direct contact	General awareness; co-op with municipalities and communities
Q1 2023				
	Wooded meadows' theme year announcement (Estonia)	General public, landowners	National and local media, social media	General awareness; landowners awareness
	Award ceremony for best managers of semi-natural habitats	General public, landowners, restorers, managers	National and local media, social media	General awareness; landowners motivation
	Creating short and detailed informational materials with all the practical information for landowners, restorers, managers, and local municipalities. Both online and on paper	Landowners, restorers/ maintainers, local municipalities	Direct contact	Landowners awareness

Time	Activity	Target group	Channel	Goals
	Make united Facebook group, gathering all landowners, restorers, and maintainers	Landowners, restorers, maintainers, municipalities	Social media	Landowners awareness, landowners motivation; landowners, restorers and maintainers co-op
	Cooperation with young nature protectors program Junior Rangers. Adding wooded meadows locations into the camp program. Learning about semi-natural habitats and the biodiversity.	General public, local communities	Social media, direct contact	General awareness
	Seminar for local municipalities – objectives of the projects; how they can support landowners etc	Local municipalities	Direct contact	General awareness; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Environment minister opinion article in islands newspapers	General public, local communities, municipalities	media	General awareness; landowners awareness
	Expert opinion article in Satori (Latvia) and Sirp (Estonia)	General public	Media	General awareness
	Expert opinion article – why restore wooded meadows	General public, local communities	Media	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation
Q2 2023				
	Information day for environmental media channels – all aspects of wooded meadows explained and showed		Direct contact	General awareness
	Project status press release to news media	Landowners, restorers/ maintainers, local communities, municipalities	media	General awareness; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Guided tours to wooded meadows in project areas	General public, landowners	Local media, social media, local communities	General awareness; landowners motivation
	Expert interview – why wooded meadow is unique; why restore wooded meadows	General public	Media, social media	General awareness; landowners awareness
	Flower crown competition	General public, local communities	Social media, campaign	General awareness
	Article – where to find flowers for midsummer night celebration	General public, local communities	Media, social media	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation;

Time	Activity	Target group	Channel	Goals
				co-op with municipalities and communities
	Seminar for state officials on topic how the project and state can be beneficial to each other in the future	Policy makers	Private event	Co-op state
	What does wooded meadow produce – quality meat, best quality honey, milk, gin.	General public, local communities	Media, social media, public event, campaign	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Start of globeflower campaign to engage the general public – "when is the last time you collected globeflowers"	General public	Campaign, media	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation; co-op with municipalities and communities
	International wooded meadows seminar in Estonia	*Project's agreed activities from partners*		
Q3 2023				
	Semi-natural habitat day	General public, landowners, local communities and municipalities	Media, public event, social media	General awareness; landowners motivation; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Drawing contest for school and kindergarten kids – a dream wooded meadow	General public	Public event, campaign, social media, homepage	General awareness
	Article - You don't own lands with wooded meadow areas? This is how you can help the restoration of wooded meadows anyway.	General public	Media, social media, public event	General awareness; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Invite elementary schools to wooded meadows	General public	Campaign, social media, homepage	General awareness; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Nature conservation holidays in collaboration with Nature Fund	General public, local communities	Public event, social media	General awareness; landowners motivation; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Landowners tour to introduce their experience with the restoring, project etc.	Landowners, general public	Public event, direct contact	Landowners awareness; landowners motivation; landowners, restorers, maintainers co-op

Time	Activity	Target group	Channel	Goals
	Article - best mushroom finding spots – species rich wooded meadows	General public, local communities	Media	General awareness
	Wooded meadow picnics – in cooperation with local caterers and communities, village councils, families with kids etc.	General public	Social media, public event	General awareness
	Open Farm Day 2023 (Estonia)	General public, local communities	Public event	General awareness
	Sunset concert at a wooded meadow	General public, local communities	Public event	General awareness
	International summer course for students		*Project's agreed activities from partners*	
	Counselling and trainings for maintainers (altogether 200 participants)		*Project's agreed activities from partners*	
Q4 2023				
	Project status press release to news media	Landowners, restorers/ maintainers, local communities, municipalities	Media	General awareness; co-op with municipalities and local communities
	Nature-themed TV program's story on how the restored wooded meadows have change since the restoration work	General public	Media	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation; landowners, restorers, maintainers co-op
	Photo gallery in local community houses – comparing old and new wooded meadows in project areas. How they were 50 years ago and now	Landowners, local communities, municipalities	Media, social media, campaign	General awareness; landowners motivation; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Ending of wooded meadows' theme year – conclusions, results, future plans	All target groups	Media, social media, homepage	General awareness
Continuous activities for 2024				
	Collaboration with photographers and videographers – offer wooded meadows as a location for photoshoots and music videos	General public	Social media	General awareness

Time	Activity	Target group	Channel	Goals
	Collaboration with private sector – sustainability output for companies. For example, instead of just planting trees in some random Amazon forest to offput their ecological footprint, local companies can support the restoration of local wooded meadows.	General public	Media, social media, homepage, public event	General awareness
Q1 2024				
	Competition – "Snitch on your neighbour" ("Anna naabrimees üles"). Finding landowners who have unrestored wooded meadows areas and don't know it themselves.	Landowners, local communities	Media, campaign	General awareness; landowners awareness
	Cooperation with the NGO Restorers of semi-natural habitats (MTÜ Eesti Poolllooduslike koosluste hooldajad) or similar in Latvia. Helping to organise teaching and experience exchange seminars, exchanging, and cooperating on new potential areas to be restored.	Landowners, restorers/ maintainers,	Social media, direct contact	Landowners motivation; landowners, restorers and maintainers co-op
	Local community meetings – how to get wooded meadows into your area?	Local communities, municipalities	Public events	General awareness; *co-op with municipalities and communities*
	Bioneer.ee – collaboration blog with a restorer – step-by-step on restoration activities	All target groups	media	General awareness; landowners awareness; *co-op with municipalities and communities*
Q2 2024				
	Cooperation with student film competition/festival, scenarios include wooded meadows	General public, local communities	Public event, social media	General awareness; landowners motivation
	Article – how to recognize a former historic area of a wooded meadow?	General public, local communities	Media, social media	General awareness; landowners awareness
	Orientation days / "geopeitus" game	General public, local communities	Social media, public event	General awareness

Time	Activity	Target group	Channel	Goals
Q3 2024				
	Influencer campaign for introducing wooded meadows (visiting and sharing their experience)	General public	Campaign, social media	General awareness
	Outside exhibition at two wooded meadows in Estonia		*Project's agreed activities from partners*	
	UNESCO seminar		*Project's agreed activities from partners*	
	14th European Ecological Restoration Conference		*Project's agreed activities from partners*	
Q4 2024				
	Gathering good case studies on how wooded meadows have become beneficial to local municipalities and communities	Local communities, municipalities	Direct contact, social media, homepage, media	General awareness; landowners awareness; landowners motivation; co-op with municipalities and communities
	Project's agreed communication activities from partners 2025+			
	2023-2025 – Added values workgroup meetings			
	2025 – Heritage seminar			
	2025 – Outside exhibition at a wooded meadow in Latvia			
	2026 – Project ending seminar in June			

Table 4. Detailed quarterly action plan for 2023 and 2024.