Project Number: [774271]

Project Acronym: [Farmer's Pride]

Project title: [Networking, partnerships and tools to enhance *in situ* conservation of European plant genetic resources]

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA STRATEGY

Farmer's Pride Communications & Media Strategy
October 2018

1. Introduction

This strategy aims to ensure consistent, coordinated and timely communication throughout the Farmer's Pride project to engage our identified stakeholder groups and disseminate the project outputs effectively. The strategy is a specific element of Work Package 5 (WP5) 'Dissemination', led by Plantlife International, and its delivery involves all collaborators in the project—the partner organisations, the External Advisory Board (EAB) and the Farmer's Pride Ambassadors (FPAs).[1]

Using the outputs from WPs 1–4, the overarching WP5 objectives are to:

i. Raise awareness of the importance of *in situ* conservation of plant genetic resources (PGR) with key stakeholders;
ii. Disseminate the project outputs and outcomes effectively to stakeholders;
iii. Build a strong coalition of support to better facilitate the *in situ* conservation, management and use of crop wild relatives (CWR) and landraces (LR) in Europe.

2. Communications and media objectives

The purpose of our communications and media activities is to support the delivery of the project's overall objectives by engaging key stakeholder groups and improving communication between existing stakeholders and networks.

As a part of the broader aims of WP5, the objectives of this strategy are to:

- Ensure that project communications and media activities by all partners, the EAB and FPAs are consistent, coordinated and timely;
- Maximise the project's reach to our target stakeholders with accessible and engaging communications;
- Encourage greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing between the stakeholder groups and project collaborators;
- Achieve a measurable impact on levels of awareness and engagement among all relevant stakeholder groups.

These activities are closely linked to the project's policy and advocacy activities which aim to create an enabling environment within national governments, the EU, UN FAO and Environment and Development Programmes for policy in support of *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of PGR. These include policy dialogues and the publication of policy briefs (both under WP3 'Enabling conservation and use'), and the delivery of targeted advocacy plans.

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[1] The EAB and Farmer's Pride Ambassadors are independent experts who support the project in a voluntary capacity by participating in project workshops and engaging their own networks in project activities and outputs. The EAB will also advise on the project's efficiency and effectiveness and lead the technical reviews.

3. Stakeholder groups

The following broad stakeholder groups (and hence audiences) have been identified by the Project partnership:
- Farmers and gardeners
- Breeding/seed sector
- Plant genetic resources (PGR) conservation sector
- Environment conservation sector
- Policymakers
- Consumers / general public

Communications are tailored to each stakeholder group based on their needs, recognising that they have varying levels of awareness of PGR conservation and use. In particular, our challenge is to engage those outside the PGR sector by relating the issue to their interests, using accessible language and communicating through appropriate formats and channels.

Key stakeholders have been identified for each output from Work Packages 1–4 so communications can be planned accordingly—see Annex 1 for details. Priority subgroups and individuals within each of the stakeholder groups will be further identified (e.g. PGR conservation farmers within the broader farmer group) as the project progresses. We are also building on the momentum of communications and media work from previous projects and partners' ongoing activities.

4. Action plan and timeline of activities

The central 'Action Plan' of the strategy—a rolling plan that is updated as the project evolves—brings together the key messages, activities, outputs, lead partner/individual roles, and timings. This is a non-public document to enable forward planning and discussion of ideas within the project.

A broad initial timeline of the project's communications activities are given below.

Year	Date	Activity or event	Lead partner(s)
2018	April	Website live	University of Birmingham (UoB)
	May	Launch of stakeholder survey	University of Perugia (UNIPG), Plantlife, UoB
	June	National seed networks workshops (Denmark, Hungary)	Pro Specie Rara, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (OMKI), Danish Seed Savers
	October	Project factsheet	Plantlife, UoB
		Policy brief no.1	Bioversity, Plantlife, UoB
		Workshop 1 in Denmark	Plantlife, UoB
	November	Annual CWR and LR newsletters published	UoB, UNIPG
2019	April	Review of options for integrated network structure	UoB
	May	Analyses of *in situ* support mechanisms and 'public will to fund' *in situ* conservation	Bioversity
	Autumn	Workshop 2	Plantlife, UoB
		Annual CWR and LR newsletters published	UoB, UNIPG
2020	April – Oct	Range of project outputs	Various
	Autumn	Annual CWR and LR newsletters published	UoB, UNIPG
		Workshop 3, policy dialogue workshop and final dissemination conference	Bioversity, Plantlife, UoB

A number of the project outputs are scheduled for publication in the last few months of the project. This will be reviewed at the first annual consortium meeting to identify those which could be delivered earlier to help phase the publications over a longer period.

5. Key messages

Key messages for the Project are developing as activities and the associated outputs are published. These are being tailored to the target stakeholder groups to have maximum effect. In the first months, the priority has been to raise general awareness of the Project itself through existing networks and to secure stakeholder engagement through a project survey . At later stages of the project, our messages will be more focused on advocacy and network-building. Key messages will be included in the rolling plan of activities.

6. Channels of communication

The project collaborators are using a number of channels for Farmer's Pride communications and media activities:

- **Project website** www.farmerspride.eu – this provides a focal point for our communications, and presents information about the project context, actions, collaborators, stakeholder survey and contact details. Further content will be added to the site as the project progresses, including pages for publications, a calendar of project events and relevant non-project events, a social media feed (e.g. for Twitter), a search form and pages dedicated to the final dissemination conference. Project collaborators will provide regular updates on their activities (with photos where possible) to be published on the site.

- **Existing networks** – the project collaborators are building on existing network structures to multiply the effects of our communications activities through each network's own newsletter, social media or other channels. These include national and regional networks that are represented in the project consortium (Arche Noah, Austria; Danish Seed Savers; Ökológiai Mezőgazdasági Kutatóintézet Közhasznú, Hungary; Pro Specie Rara, Switzerland; the Nordic Genetic Resource Centre; European Seed Association; Eurosite; and the European Association for Research on Plant Breeding via the Universitat Politècnica de València and UoB), as well as the European Cooperative Programme for Plant Genetic Resources (ECPGR), and other regional and national networks that the project collaborators are connected with.

- **Print media** – national newspapers and magazines.

- **Social media** – channels such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter will be used as part of a multimedia approach. The accounts of partner organisations and individuals will be important channels for this and we will use the hashtag #farmersprideeu and other existing # to share content e.g. #cropwildrelative.

- **Conferences and workshops** attended by the project collaborators.

- **Newsletters, journals, blogs** and other specialist publications aimed at our target stakeholders.

7. Project outputs

All outputs from WPs 1–4 are being designed from the outset to be as compelling and useful as possible (e.g. including case studies to represent different situations and scenarios, backed up by audio-visual materials where possible). These include:

- Policy briefings and advocacy documents;
- Technical reports;
- Newsletters;
- Conference abstracts, presentations and posters;
- Peer-reviewed research papers;
- Best practice guidelines, case studies and toolkits;
- Reports from workshops and other events (e.g. open days);
- Network launch and conference.

Other resources are being produced specifically to support communications and media work:

- **Communications and branding guidelines** for project outputs and communications (published May 2018);
- **Project factsheet** as a generic tool to introduce stakeholders to the project;
- **Stories and case studies** – these are being gathered from the project collaborators based on existing resources, and used for communications throughout the project;
- **Audio-visual elements** – videos, photographs, infographics – many partners have existing resources which can be used by the Farmer's Pride project.

Languages

Our project communications are provided in English and, where possible, other European languages. For example, the online stakeholder survey is available in English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Spanish and Turkish, and is being translated into Finnish. The availability of different language versions of communications does however depend either on the partners being able to translate text or the project securing new funding to pay for professional translation.

Our translation needs will depend on the target stakeholders for each product and the best means of communicating with them. For example, the FP stakeholder survey is available in numerous languages to enable a wide range of stakeholders to participate: www.farmerspride.eu/survey

Open Access

Research papers and other outputs will be published with open access – including the publication of pre-print versions of journal papers online.

8. Communications protocol

A communications protocol has been disseminated to all partners to ensure that our communications and media work is effectively coordinated, reflects the consortium's shared objectives, and maintains high standards. This includes guidance on the use of the Farmer's Pride logo and the EU emblem. Partners are working in close consultation with Plantlife in producing publications and other materials on behalf of the project.

9. Coordination with Dynaversity communications and social media strategies

Farmer's Pride partners are working in collaboration with partners in the Dynaversity project (www.dynaversity.eu) which was funded under the same call. As part of this, Plantlife is working in liaison with the Communications WP5 leader for the Dynaversity project, FormicaBlu, to coordinate activities and share information between the two projects. This coordination will be ongoing as part of the wider collaboration between Farmer's Pride and Dynaversity.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

The action plan will be discussed and reviewed at each consortium meeting to ensure that it is a flexible 'living' document that reflects the project's objectives and the changing external context. A number of metrics will be identified to measure the impact of our communications and media activities, such as the number of responses to our stakeholder surveys.

Annex 1: Results of Farmer's Pride partner survey to identify relevant stakeholder groups for each project deliverable

Farmer's Pride deliverable	Stakeholder group / sector					
	Farmer / gardener	Breeding / seed sector	PGR conservation	Nature conservation	Policy-maker	Consumer / public
D1.1 Identify in situ stakeholders	70%	40%	90%	90%	60%	30%
D1.2 Knowledge of in situ resources/sites	56%	67%	89%	89%	67%	33%
D1.3 LR network showcases	88%	50%	100%	38%	63%	63%
D1.4 LR hotspots identification	75%	50%	100%	50%	50%	50%
D1.5 CWR Network showcases	56%	44%	89%	89%	67%	33%
D2.1 CWR Population management guidelines	14%	0%	71%	86%	71%	0%
D2.2 In situ conservation informatics management tools	71%	29%	86%	71%	43%	14%
D2.3 Community Seedbank Management Guidelines	78%	56%	89%	33%	67%	22%
D2.4 LR Population Management & Access Guidelines	86%	71%	100%	14%	71%	14%
D2.5 Concept for in situ inclusion in EURISCO	63%	63%	100%	63%	63%	0%
D2.6 Integrated In situ & ex situ conservation guidelines	56%	56%	100%	78%	67%	11%
D3.1 Analysis of effectiveness of in situ support mechanisms	29%	29%	100%	86%	71%	14%
D3.2 Analysis of public will to fund in situ conservation	33%	0%	56%	56%	78%	67%
D3.3 Identify in situ areas with useful adaptive traits	100%	71%	86%	71%	71%	43%
D3.4 Showcase showing improved in situ resource access	75%	100%	100%	88%	63%	25%
D3.5 Strategic Action Plan for PGR in situ maintenance	71%	29%	100%	86%	86%	29%
D3.6 Policy dialogue workshop to enhance in situ maintenance	71%	43%	100%	71%	100%	29%
D4.1 Integrated national/European network structure	56%	67%	89%	100%	89%	44%
D4.2 LR network design	75%	38%	100%	0%	50%	13%
D4.3 CWR network design	25%	25%	88%	88%	50%	0%
D4.4 European in situ conservation network of sites / stakeholders	63%	50%	88%	100%	88%	50%
D5.5 Annual newsletters - CWR and LR	100%	88%	100%	100%	88%	63%
D5.6 Publication of case studies best practice and toolkits	88%	63%	88%	75%	75%	50%
D5.8 Dissemination conference	63%	88%	88%	100%	100%	50%
D5.9 Practice abstracts	86%	71%	71%	86%	71%	57%

**Note: darker shading indicates the deliverable is considered more relevant to the stakeholder group