



FERRO

Fostering European
Lake Restoration

Deliverable D2.2 – Plan for Exploitation Communication and Dissemination (PECD)

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Summary

Deliverable D2.2 provides a strategy and implementation plan for guiding the dissemination, exploitation, and communication (DEC) activities of FERRO. These efforts are vital for maximising FERRO's impact and extending the project's influence. The Plan for Exploitation, Communication and Dissemination (PECD) will be revised in M24 (May 2026, D2.3) and M42 (November 2027, D2.4) to reflect FERRO's progress and maturity, ensuring a tailored approach that adapts to changing DEC needs at each stage.

In addition to defining the objectives and scope of the project's DEC efforts, the PECD will identify the primary FERRO stakeholder groups and methods to reach them, gathered through a consortium-wide questionnaire. The plan also outlines the anticipated knowledge outputs of the project. Based on these elements, D2.2 describes the main DEC tools and assesses their relevance for different target audiences. Finally, a specific implementation plan is provided for the initial project phase (until the PECD update in 2026), along with indicators to actively monitor the effectiveness of these actions.

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|------|---|
| DEC | Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication |
| DMP | Data Management Plan |
| OA | Open Access |
| PECD | Plan for Exploitation Communication & Dissemination |
| EO | Earth Observation |
| DoA | Description of Action |

1. Introduction

A critical factor in the success of large-scale, multi-partner research projects is the timely establishment of a comprehensive and targeted outreach strategy. This approach supports effective knowledge exchange and uptake of project results, while also maximising societal impact. A key part of such a strategy is identifying relevant target audiences and tailoring key messages, as well as determining the optimal channels and timelines for promoting project results (communication), sharing them with potential users (dissemination), and putting them into practice (exploitation). Together, dissemination, exploitation, and communication (DEC) function as complementary outreach avenues, with distinct objectives that work synergistically to enhance project impact.

FERRO's DEC activities are outlined below, forming a complete DEC package together with the project's website (D2.1). To develop the best possible approach, FERRO conducted a consortium-wide consultation via a questionnaire distributed to all project partners. Combined with the project's description of action (DoA), this provided a foundation for shaping the PECD. The questionnaire, distributed in M5 (October 2024), included 15 questions covering specific DEC needs, collaboration opportunities, target groups, and suitable DEC channels for anticipated results.

Building on this foundation, and in alignment with the Grant Agreement, the PECD defines the project's target audiences (who), research activities and outcomes (what), relevant tools and channels (how), and the planned timeline for implementing these activities (when). This serves as a framework for future DEC efforts and a management tool to evaluate how effectively FERRO's progress and results reach stakeholders and target audiences.

The WP2 activities described in this deliverable will be supported by the consortium, acting as a unified dissemination entity for all project-related outcomes, ensuring that project results are broadly distributed across a far-reaching network of stakeholders.

1.1 Communication

As the broadest of the DEC activities, FERRO's communication efforts began at the project's inception and will continue beyond its completion. These efforts aim to promote and make project results accessible to a wide audience, including both technical and non-technical stakeholder groups. By presenting findings in an engaging way, FERRO seeks to reach stakeholders like the general public, media, limnological and agricultural organisations, and policy makers. Additionally, communication efforts encourage two-way interactions between the community and the project consortium to raise awareness and influence biodiversity monitoring, conservation strategies, and the development of sustainable Phosphorus recycling methodologies.

To ensure effective outreach, FERRO will utilise a variety of materials, formats, and channels tailored to each target group's needs. Partners are also encouraged to leverage their personal

and institutional networks to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration with the following networks identified through the consortium survey, as well as other relevant national and international stakeholders:

- The European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform (ESPP)
- The European Environment Agency (EEA)
- The Mission Ocean Network
- FERRO's sister projects FutureLakes, EuroLakes and ProCleanLakes
- Association for the sciences of limnology and oceanography (ASLO)
- World Water Quality Alliance (WWQA)
- North American Lake Management Society (NALMS)
- Cyanobloom project
- Czech Water Association
- Finnish Society of Limnology
- World Farmers' organisation (WFO)
- YARA International
- German Society for Limnology (DGL)
- International Society of Limnology (SIL)

FERRO will also draw on established contacts with major newsrooms, media outlets, and information platforms, including partner newsletters, EurekAlert!, and AlphaGalileo.

1.2 Dissemination

FERRO is dedicated to making its findings widely accessible to potential users and the broader scientific community. Therefore, dissemination efforts will commence as soon as project results materialise, employing both traditional and modern approaches. A range of one- and two-way channels will be used to ensure that stakeholders—such as lake managers, decision makers, farmers, practitioners, policymakers, and civil society—can all benefit from the project's outcomes.

For one-way dissemination, FERRO will adhere to an open-access (OA) policy for scientific publications, tools, maps, and other outputs whenever possible. This includes utilising gold or green open-access and recognised public repositories like Zenodo for archiving data and related documentation, such as code. For more details on data management practices, refer to D2.5 Data Management Plan (DMP, M7). The lake-based research and practitioner community will benefit from curated materials that highlight the project's methodologies and findings, such as infographics or videos.

FERRO's two-way dissemination focuses on targeted approaches to engage specific audiences. To share best practices and enhance visibility, the project collaborates with networks, initiatives, and intergovernmental organisations through activities like workshops, webinars, press releases, and social media campaigns. Lake managers and decision makers will receive actionable

recommendations through policy briefs and webinars based on insights from the project's pilot sites and the success of restoration and P-recycling measures there. Additionally, demonstrations of Earth Observation (EO) - based lake monitoring methodologies will be carried out (D4.2, D4.3, D10.2) and a dedicated roadmap for the adoption of FERRO solutions will be developed (D10.2).

1.3 Exploitation

Scientific exploitation will be pursued throughout the project duration and after its end through scientific publications. Furthermore, as concrete results emerge, DEC activities will increasingly emphasise practical applications to support management, agricultural and societal needs. To facilitate effective exploitation of the project's findings, FERRO will engage in ongoing, in-depth dialogue with stakeholders, provide training activities, and draw on their specific expertise. Target groups will be encouraged to engage with and provide feedback on FERRO's results through online workshops, webinars, and other project events, with further details to be provided in the PEDR update (D2.3, M24) and D10.2 & D10.3.

To maximise the visibility and exploitation potential of project results, FERRO will also make use of opportunities offered by the European Commission. This includes publishing findings on the Horizon Results Platform and Open Research Europe, as well as enhancing exploitation activities through the Horizon Results Booster. These platforms will serve as valuable channels to reach policymakers and researchers, providing access to the project's prioritised, high-value results.

2. Target Groups (*who*)

To ensure FERRO's DEC measures are effective, they must be carefully tailored to the project's target groups. These groups were initially outlined in FERRO's description of action (DoA) and have been further refined based on insights from the consortium-wide survey. The survey also gathered key messages for each target group to guide DEC activities. Updates of the PECD (D2.3 & D2.4) will also feature key messages for each target group, based on the emerging project results, methodologies and recommendations. The key messages will be delivered in a targeted way through deliberate DEC activities.

The project unites expertise in lake restoration and management, agriculture, limnology, biotechnology, and Earth observation to generate and share knowledge relevant to researchers, practitioners and the general public as a whole. Consequently, the main stakeholder categories have been identified as (i) the scientific community, (ii) farmers & agricultural organisations, (iii) lake-based community & business, (iv) water management organisations, (v) relevant networks and initiatives, (vi) policymakers on EU, national and local level, and (vii) the general public. A detailed breakdown of sub-groups, individual stakeholders, and networks from a local, national and international level is provided below.

2.1 Scientific Community (S)

The scientific community is among the primary target groups of FERRO. It includes researchers from a wide range of fields, including limnology, biotechnology, remote sensing, agricultural sciences, etc. Some sub-groups include:

- Association for the sciences of limnology and oceanography (ASLO)
- The BIGFE project
- The CyanoBLOOM project (LIFE)
- International Society of Limnology (SIL)
- German Board of Drinking water reservoirs (ATT)
- Joint research Centre (JRC)

2.2 Farmers & Agricultural organisations (F)

Farmers and the agricultural community are one of the main potential beneficiaries of FERRO results and methodologies related to lake-derived phosphorus recycling and reuse as fertiliser. As such, they are an important stakeholder group to actively engage and share knowledge with. Some individual target groups include:

- Local farmers in the catchments around FERRO pilot sites
- Ormstrup Gods A/S
- YARA International
- World Farmers' Organisation (WFO)
- The German Farmers' Association

2.3 Lake-based community & Business (L)

Lake-based researchers, businesses and practitioners can reap benefits from implementing FERRO methodologies and are a valuable source of best practices for the consortium. Two-way communication with the key sub-groups below is an important part of the project's DEC efforts:

- Community for Inland waters Germany
- Finnish Society of Limnology
- German Limnological Society
- Der Landestourismusverband (LTV) Sachsen
- Global Lake Ecological Observatory Network (GLEON)
- International Society for Limnology (SIL)
- German Board of Drinking water reservoirs (ATT)

2.4 Water Management organisations (W)

Water management organisations represent an important stakeholder group for implementing project results and integrating them into local, national and international lake restoration frameworks and efforts. Close collaboration with them is imperative for ensuring adequate exploitation and uptake of results during and beyond the project duration:

- Czech Water Association
- The International Water Association (IWA)
- Drinking Water Reservoirs Association (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Trinkwassertalsperren e. V.)
- Landestalsperrenverwaltung Sachsen (LTV)
- Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management
- Elbe River Authority
- State Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Areas (Landesamt for Environment Schleswig-Holstein), Germany
- Authority for the Environment, Climate, Energy and Agriculture (Behörde für Umwelt, Klima, Energie und Agrarwirtschaft), Germany
- Baden-Württemberg State Institute for the Environment (Landesanstalt für Umwelt Baden-Württemberg), Germany
- Vltava Basin Authorities state enterprise
- Länsi-Uusimaa water and environment association (Länsi-Uudenmaan Vesi ja Ympäristö ry), Finland
- Rusutjärven seura ry
- Siuntionjoki lake protection association (Siuntiojen latvajärvien suojeluyhdistys), Finland
- Pusulanjärvi Water Protection Association (Pusulanjärven suojeluyhdistys), Finland
- Vesijärvi Foundation
- Keski-Uudenmaan Environmental Center (Keski-Uudenmaan Ympäristökeskus), Finland
- The Danish Environmental Protection Agency (Miljøstyrelsen)

2.5 Relevant Networks and Initiatives (RN)

Relevant networks and initiatives within the wider scope of biodiversity, lake, and water management, Earth observation, agriculture and phosphorous research will also be engaged in FERRO communication, dissemination and exploitation efforts:

- FutureLakes, EuroLakes, and ProCleanLakes HEU sister projects
- The network of experts for water, wastewater and waste (DWA)
- Copernicus Services (CLMS)
- UNEP World Water Quality Alliance
- SIL Working Group on Lake Restoration
- Deutsche Phosphor-Plattform DPP e.V
- The European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform (ESPP)
- Czech Phosphorus Platform
- Joint Research Centre (JRC) Ispra

2.6 Policymakers (P)

Policymakers represent one of the key stakeholders for FERRO as their involvement can lead to implementing project-derived methodologies and recommendations. The project responds to EU flagships such as the European Green Deal and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Key policymakers also include a range of local, national, regional, and international authorities, from ministries and environmental agencies to conservation and land use planning authorities working under the key policy frameworks of the CBD, IPBES and IPCC. Examples of such include:

- The Danish Environmental Protection Agency (Miljøstyrelsen)
- The German Environment Agency (UBA)
- Environmental Agencies in all case study and associated countries
- European Environmental Agency (EEA)
- Mission Ocean and Waters Implementation Platform & Communication Collaborative
- Water authorities of German States

2.7 General Public (GP)

Engaging the general public and gaining their support and interest in FERRO's activities is an important factor in ensuring a large impact of project results. This group also includes the NGO sector, media, and educational institutions, such as:

- House of Natural Sciences (Naturvidenskabernes Hus), Denmark
- Natural History Museums in consortium and associated countries
- Citizen Science organisations

3. Project Results, Outcomes & Wider Impact (*what*)

FERRO will highlight its Key Exploitable Results (KERs) and anticipated outcomes in its DEC activities by strategically promoting them to appropriate target audiences. Table 1 outlines FERRO's Key Exploitable Results along with potential stakeholders or users for each (identified through the consortium questionnaire). Stakeholders include: Scientific Community (S); Farmers & Agricultural organisations (F); Lake-based community and business (L); Water management organisations (W); Relevant networks & initiatives (RN); Policymakers (P) and the General public (GP).

Table 1. FERRO Key Exploitable Results and potential stakeholder users. Stakeholders: Scientific Community (S); Farmers & Agricultural organisations (F); Lake-based community and business (L); Water management organisations (W); Relevant networks & initiatives (RN); Policymakers (P) and the General public (GP)

| Output (KERs) | Deliverable (Available in) | Target Audience(s) |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Creation of a lake restoration database | D3.1 (M13); D3.2 (M34); D3.3 (M48) | L, W, S, P, RN, GP |
| Remote sensing catchment and lake water quality assessment tool | D4.1 (M24); D4.2 (M30) | L, W, S, P, RN |
| Dashboard for monitoring restoration measure impact | D4.3 (M42) | L, W, S, P, RN, GP |
| Nutrient recycling methodologies using biotechnology | D5.1 (M46); D5.2 (M46) | W, F, S, RN |
| Nutrient recovery protocols for lake inflows | D6.1 (M25); D6.2 (M46) | L, W, S, RN |
| Sonar-enabled sediment analysis | D7.2 (M46); D7.3 (M46); D9.1 (M36) | L, W, S, RN |
| Lake nutrient removal via solar pump system | D8.1 (M12) | L, W, S, F, RN |
| Lake nutrient removal via excavation of sediments | D9.2 (M46); D9.3 (M46) | L, W, S, F, RN |

4. Tools and Channels (*How*)

FERRO will maximise its impact through a multi-modal approach by combining one-way and bi-directional DEC tools and channels tailored to the identified target groups. A blend of traditional (such as press releases and newsletters) and interactive approaches (like webinars and workshops) will be employed while remaining flexible and responsive to the project's evolving DEC needs.

4.1 Project Website

The FERRO website (www.ferroproject.eu) acts as a central hub for results and DEC activities, providing easy access to all project outputs, including deliverables, publications, and videos. (For further information, see *D2.1 Project Website*).

4.2 Promotional Materials

A range of FERRO promotional materials will be created following the project's Brand Manual and written in accessible language, suitable for a broad technical and non-technical audience. These materials will form a visually cohesive and recognisable package, presenting essential information about the project along with links to its website and social media profiles. They will be available for distribution at in-person events and for online download.

The promotional materials will include:

- Brochures
- Posters
- Stickers

The initial set of materials can be expanded or translated into additional languages as needed to support the project's goals.

4.3 Social Media

FERRO has selected LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter) as its primary social media channels, supplemented by a YouTube channel to host project-related video content, which will also be embedded on the project website.

- X (Twitter) -@FERROproject
- LinkedIn – FERRO Project
- YouTube – @FERROProject

The FERRO social media channels are managed and regularly updated by the communication team at Pensoft Publishers to ensure consistent, streamlined communication across platforms.

To broaden the reach and enhance social media impact, project partners are encouraged to support by (i) sharing news, photos, and updates for social media promotion and (ii) amplifying FERRO’s posts through their own personal or institutional social media channels.

4.3.1 Social media campaigns

An editorial calendar outlining specific social media campaigns and their timelines has been developed to ensure ongoing activity and impact of FERRO’s social media presence (Table 3). Any adjustments or additions to these planned campaigns will be made as needed based on project developments and will be reflected in the updated PECD by M24 (May 2026).

Table 3. *Planned social media campaigns and their durations*

| Name | Hashtag | Description | Duration (in months) |
|-------------------|-------------------|---|----------------------|
| FERRO Partners | #FERROPartners | Introducing the consortium institutions and their role in the project. | 2M |
| Previous Research | #PreviousResearch | Highlighting valuable publications that form the backbone of FERRO activities. | 4M |
| Faces of FERROs | #FERROsFaces | Introducing members of the consortium, their role and expertise. | 4M |
| FERRO Pilots | #FERROpilots | Presenting FERRO’s pilot and experimental sites (case studies), where they are and what activities are carried out there. | 2M |

4.4 Cloud Dashboard

A cloud-hosted dashboard will be developed (D4.3, M42) that compiles lake information from different sources (EO, in-situ and auxiliary data). It will support decision making for lake restoration partners, researchers and lake managers. The dashboard will serve as a prototype that can be upscaled for a large set of European lakes. We will seek to collaborate with sister projects and other willing initiatives to contribute information about lakes of interest that can be included.

4.5 Project Videos

FERRO will create informative videos highlighting project outcomes and activities, serving as an alternative DEC tool to help researchers reach a broader audience and promote knowledge exchange. Planned topics include an introductory project video and videos from our case study lakes and the methodologies tested there.

4.6 Policy Brief & Public Deliverables

To serve technical and policy audiences, FERRO will make public deliverables and a policy brief available for download on the project website and in open-access repositories. The policy brief will be designed to address specific needs and knowledge gaps relevant to EU initiatives, such as the European Green Deal and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, as well as other strategies and directives. For transparency, summaries of confidential deliverables will also be published, upon permission and feedback from the relevant project partners.

4.7 Webinars & Training

To maximise the uptake of project results, FERRO will organise 6 webinars with FERRO methodologies and solutions for scientists, early career researchers, students, policymakers, and advisors interested in lake restoration. The webinars will cover a wide array of topics and will be recorded and made available on YouTube, the project website and other DEC channels for continued knowledge uptake. A report will be created on the webinar's attendance statistics, impact and evaluation (D10.3, M46).

4.8 Newsletter

FERRO will distribute a bi-annual newsletter, aligned with the visual identity outlined in the project's Brand Manual, covering key project developments and outcomes for each period. This newsletter will also serve as a platform for important announcements, upcoming milestones, job openings, and calls to action. To encourage collaboration and knowledge-sharing, FERRO will look for opportunities to include relevant updates from its sister projects and, in turn, also share updates within their newsletters.

4.9 Research Publications

FERRO will share its findings through research articles published in high-impact scientific journals, with pre-prints submitted when appropriate. Journals of particular interest to the consortium include *Ecological Engineering*, *Water Research*, *Journal of Environmental Management*, *Science of The Total Environment*, *Water MDPI*, *Organic Geochemistry* and others. To maximise dissemination and reuse potential, the project will, whenever possible, deposit its scientific articles, datasets, and workflows in trusted open-access repositories.

4.10 Press Releases

To engage a broad audience and connect with journalists and media, FERRO will share major updates and news on three prominent science news portals: EurekAlert!, AlphaGalileo and WIT News. Press releases will be crafted in collaboration with project partners to convey information clearly and effectively, allowing it to reach a wide audience.

Additional opportunities will be sought to also publish press releases and news items in local or national news outlets, identified through the consortium survey, such as the UFZ public relations office and mdr.de.

4.11 Conference Presentations

The FERRO consortium actively participates in relevant scientific conferences and will seek opportunities to present project results there both orally and via a poster. This will further support knowledge exchange with the scientific community and promote two-way discussion around FERRO results.

A preliminary list of relevant conferences can be found below:

- 16th International Symposium on the Interactions between Sediments and Water
- Lahti Lakes 2027
- The European Geosciences Union Symposium 2025
- ESA Living Planet Symposium 2025
- Water Reservoirs 2025
- Shallow lakes conference

4.12 Collaboration & Joint Activities

To foster synergies with relevant projects and initiatives, FERRO will explore opportunities for joint activities such as online or in-person workshops, webinars, press releases, and newsletters. Close collaboration will be carried out with the sister projects FutureLakes, ProCleanLakes and EuroLakes, as well as with relevant networks such as the ESPP and the Mission Oceans communications team. The goal is to strengthen the lake restoration network in Europe, integrate and exchange results and methodologies, and collaborate on policy recommendations.

5. Implementation

FERRO's implementation plan (outlined in Table 3) details the project's DEC tools and activities for the first 24 months, their target stakeholder groups, and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will assess their effectiveness.

To better align DEC activities with the project's needs, FERRO's timeline will be divided into three development stages – Initiating, Unfolding, and Maturity (Figure 1), each with a distinct focus on planned activities. The first set of DEC KPIs will cover the Initiating stage (M1-M24; June 2024 – May 2026). In May 2026, an evaluation of the KPIs will take place, and new KPIs will be defined for the next development stage within D2.3 (M24). This approach allows for flexibility in DEC efforts, ensuring they align with project outcomes, while also providing multiple evaluation points to meet the KPIs for each stage.

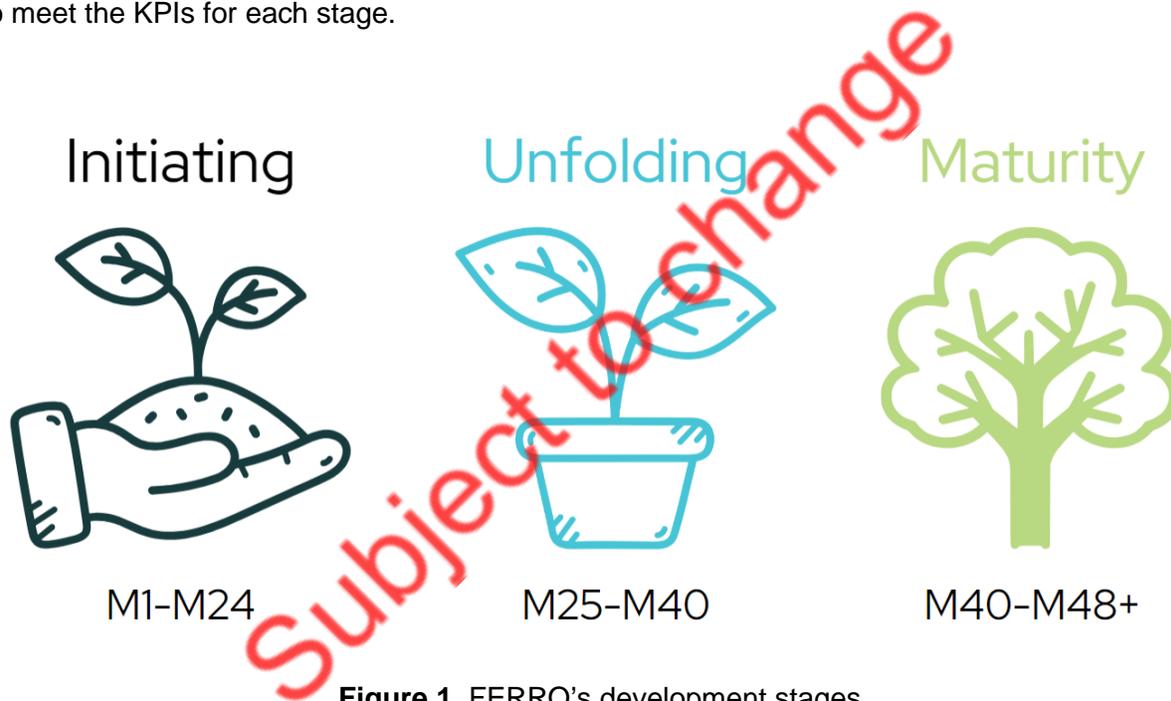


Figure 1. FERRO's development stages

Initiating – Focus on raising awareness about the project, building an organic network and engaging with target groups.

Unfolding – Focus on presenting specific project results and activities and active engagement with stakeholders.

Maturity – Focus on the exploitation of results and liaising with potential end-users; planning the project's legacy.

Table 3. Overview of the first set of FERRO’s DEC KPIs covering the Initiating project stage (M1-M24). Stakeholder groups: Scientific Community (S); Farmers & Agricultural organisations (F); Lake-based community and business (L); Water management organisations (W); Relevant networks & initiatives (RN); Policymakers (P) and the General public (GP)

| Type of DEC activity | Tool | Stakeholder Group | KPI |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| C & D | Project Website | All | 20 news items; 15 uploads to library; 4000 visitors; >120s. average session |
| C | Promotional Materials | All | 3 materials produced; >100 distributed; utilised at >10 events |
| C & D | Social Media | All | >2 posts per week; >1 repost per week; 200 followers across platforms; 50 000 impressions; 1500 users traffic to website |
| C & D | Project Videos | All | 1st project video available; >400 views |
| C & D | Newsletter | All | 4 issues; >100 subscribers; >35% open rate; >20% click-rate; >50 downloads from website |
| D & E | Research Publications | S, L, W, RN | >5 publications |
| C & D | Press Releases | F, P, RN, GP | 3 releases; >7500 views |
| C & D | Presentation at conferences & scientific events | S, L, RN, P | >4 national or international events |
| D & E | Public Deliverables | S, L, W, RN, P | 7 Deliverables on website; >50 downloads |
| All | Webinars & Training | All | N/A for this stage of the project |

| Type of DEC activity | Tool | Stakeholder Group | KPI |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| D & E | Collaboration & Joint activities | All | N/A for this stage of the project |
| D & E | Policy Brief | W, P | N/A for this stage of the project |
| D & E | Cloud Dashboard | All | N/A for this stage of the project |

6. Outlook

To ensure FERRO's PECD aligns with project requirements and progress, it will undergo updates twice throughout the project – at M24 and M42. These scheduled updates serve as evaluation points for DEC progress by the consortium and project network, facilitate the implementation of high-level KPIs, and allow for adjustments to KPI plans as needed, supporting the timely execution of DEC actions.

Subject to change