
NATURA 2000
How to communicate your LIFE project?
LIFE16 Kick-off meeting: Climate action
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neemo
ec.europa.eu/life



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfXCOyw6FVw



Communication is essential to your project

Think ahead and decide what do you want to achieve with your project? Analyse the problem: What is the main obstacle?

Set **SMART communication objectives**: What do you need to do to overcome that obstacle?

S Specific - M Measurable - A Achievable - R Relevant - T Time-bound

Make your achievements known and share knowledge to encourage replication

- During the project, highlight the main things you are doing and results along the way

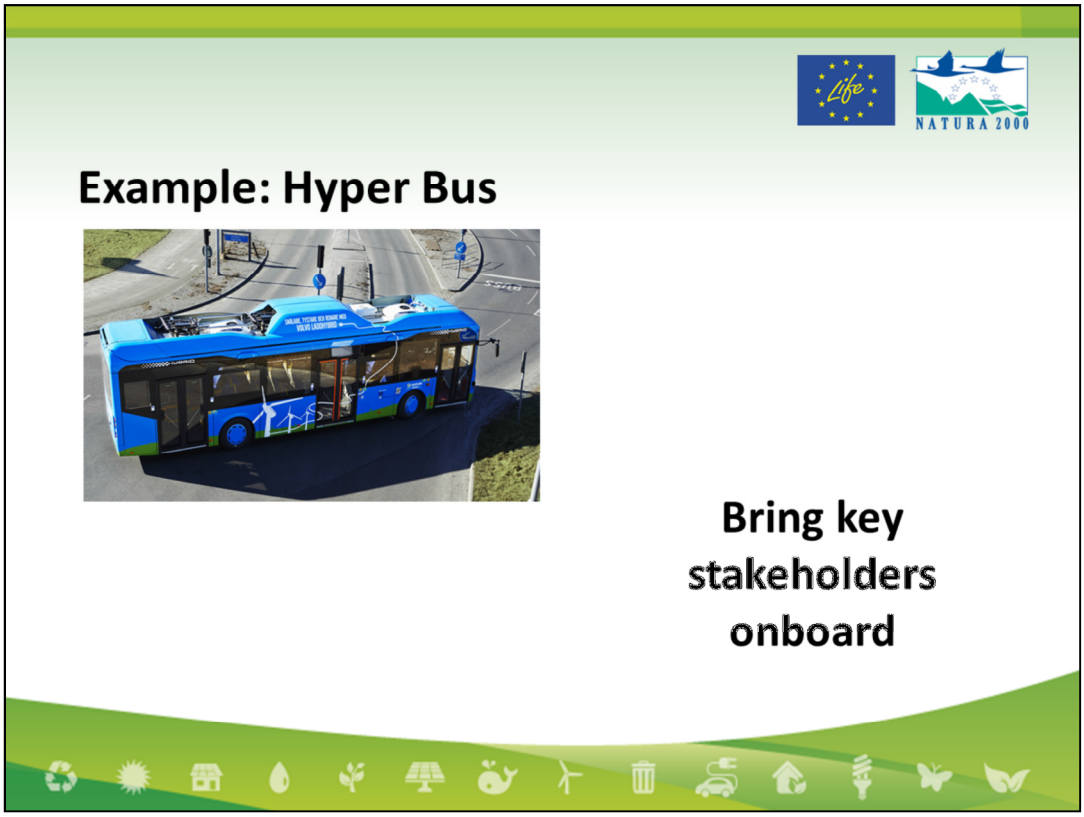
- Make your difference known – what's new about your project, reach the audience & exchange views, analyse gaps & constraints that can be solved

- Show people your expertise and your comparative advantage enlarge your networks and be open to possible synergies

- Synergies will allow you to fine-tune and transfer your initiatives as well as helping you gain a distinct place in the market

- Let policy-makers know what you are doing. Put them in your communications loop at local, regional, national and EU level. Let them see the transferability of your good practices and the link between your project and EU/national policies.

For all these reasons develop a targeted and solid communication strategy and start communicating from the VERY beginning of the project!!!



From the beginning of the project, identify and involve the key stakeholders who can support your project.

This often means reaching out to the general public. For instance, the Swedish LIFE project, **Hyper Bus (LIFE10 ENV/SE/000041)** introduced hybrid buses with a newly developed plug-in technology, which makes it possible to electrify most of the bus routes in Gothenburg.

To drive the market, the project commissioned a targeted “public attitude survey” as a communication practice that was designed both to raise awareness and to understand trends. The survey had the following results:
- Raised awareness (more than 70% of the citizens of Gothenburg)
- Identified the willingness to pay higher fares if that translated to more frequent buses.

It's not enough to just provide a new technology, you also need to get people to use it – and that means communicating with them!



Design your communication strategy

- **Identify the stakeholders you want to reach and segment your audience**

Be as specific as possible in identifying them. Target students, families, businesses, public authorities and policy-makers, local, national and international media.
Connect with existing networks that can act as multipliers, e.g. networks of cities and regions, networks of NGOs, business associations etc.

- **Define your communication objectives**

Look at your project objectives and analyse the type of results you have produced (scientific findings, process improvement, best practices guidelines, etc.)
When communication objectives are well defined, they can help you achieve the objectives of the project as a whole.

- **Choose the messages to convey to your audiences: adapt language and contents**

Use different messages for different audiences. Speak in the « language » that will deliver the message to your different target groups.

- **Target your means of communication to your audience and be creative!**

For disseminating information, use press releases, newsletters, websites,

videos,etc
For interactive communication, use events, meetings, training, exhibitions, social media incl. blogs, helpdesks, media events etc.
Visualise complex ideas – a picture says a thousand words. Think about infographics, pictograms, posters and cartoons.
Try different techniques: personal stories and statistics can both be effective at different times and with different audiences.

- **Design your communication plan, taking everything we have mentioned into account**

- **Evaluate your impact**: Check your results based on your SMART objectives – through statistics, surveys, questionnaires, feedback etc.

Did you achieve your objectives? Did the target audience do what you expected? e.g. did multipliers share your information?
Did people change their behaviour? What lessons have you learned? Do you need to adapt your strategy?



Communication requirements from the Grant Agreement & Application Guidelines to ensure the **visibility of EU support**

The LIFE **logo** should appear on all documents (publications, audio-visual material, project website, etc.) media, and durable goods

Nature projects shall also use the Natura 2000 logo

The use of the logo is restricted

- to dissemination activities
- may NOT be referred to as a certified quality label or eco-label

Warning! The costs of products not bearing the logos are ineligible!



LIFE project beneficiaries have a number of <u>obligatory</u> and <u>recommended</u> communication requirements.
Here we will focus on the <u>obligatory</u> ones:

•Website:
Create a new website or use an existing one to disseminate project activities, progress and results in at least one EU official language
The project website must be online within six months of the start of the project, maintained for at least five years after the project ends and should be updated regularly
The web address must be indicated in the reports.

· **Noticeboards:** The beneficiaries shall build and maintain noticeboards (also known as on-site panels or interpretation boards) describing the project
Noticeboards for LIFE Nature projects shall carry both the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos.

• Networking with other LIFE or non-LIFE projects:

Check the LIFE projects database for projects that are similar or might be of interest

Share your know-how and experience - fostering replication and sustainability of

project results

Networking activities can include: project visits, meetings, exchange of information with other projects, participation in events related to the project

objectives.

• **Layman's report**:
A short report at the end of the project sthat presents the project to a general audience. The Layman's report should include the project's objectives, actions and results in English and in the local language.

• **After-LIFE plan**:
Sets out how the actions initiated by the project will be continued and developed after it ends. This includes information about how results will continue be communicated and disseminated.

Bear this in mind in your communication plan!

Other communication actions are also <u>recommended</u>:

- **Community engagement** - through local events, such as public meetings, open days, guided visits and meetings with interest groups.
- **Expert engagement** - through workshops, seminars and conferences.
- **Production of publicity material** - project videos, posters, leaflets, etc.
- **Public relations** – this includes working with the media at the most appropriate level to ensure the best coverage of the project's results; use of social media; and engagement with policymakers at national and EU level to maximise the impact of the project.

More information can be found in the <u>LIFE communication toolkit</u>:

(http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/toolkit/comtools)

This includes a summary of obligatory and recommended communication actions

Links to key resources such as LIFE logos and Powerpoints

Examples of good practices and inspiration from other projects, including unusual, imaginative and effective promotional activities (e.g. songs, nest cams).
A recommended reading list to help with presentation, effective communication and social media.



Most of the LIFE communications tools can be found on the LIFE website

ec.europa.eu/life

LIFEnews: this monthly electronic publication includes highlights and news from the programme, upcoming events and features on successful projects and events. Subscribe online!

Focus brochures: thematic brochures featuring notable examples of LIFE projects in specific thematic areas. The aim is to link these good examples with the goals of the EU's environment and climate action policy.

LIFE project database: This searchable resource contains information about every LIFE project since 1992! More than 4500 projects in total. Each summary includes a brief description of the project's objectives and results (or expected results for ongoing projects), as well as budget information, contact details and links to websites, social media and other useful information. You can select projects by year, country, thematic area or by using key words.

Social Media: The LIFE programme is also on Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin and YouTube.



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Tel.: +32 (0)2 736.56.43

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Thank you for your attention!
Questions?
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