



# Needs

*New Sustainable Fuel Deployment Scenarios  
for the European Waterborne Community*

## D5.1 Communication and Dissemination Action Plan





Work Package	5
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## List of Acronyms

CSA	Collaborative and support action, type of project
C&D	Communication and dissemination
EC	European Commission
ESPO	The European Sea Ports Organisation
ICMASS	The International Conference on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ship
IPR	Intellectual property right
ITS	Intelligent Transport Systems
KPI	Key performance indicator
NEEDS	New Sustainable Fuel Deployment Scenarios for the European Waterborne Community project
RD&I	Research, development and innovation
SAF	Sustainable alternative fuel
SN	The STEERER Network (experts' group)
SRIA	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda
STEERER	Structuring Towards Zero Emission Waterborne Transport project
TRB	Transportation Research Board (USA)
WP	Work Package
ZEWT cPP	the co-Programmed Partnership on Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport



## 1. Introduction – The NEEDS Project

The New Sustainable Fuel Deployment Scenarios for the European Waterborne Community (NEEDS) project is a Horizon Europe collaborative and support action (CSA) project launched as part of the activities financed by the Co-Programmed Partnership on Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport<sup>1</sup> (ZEWTP cPP). Its aim is to help the Partnership members and the European waterborne transport community as a whole to find the best insights for the future deployment of sustainable alternative fuels at Union level.

Deploying sustainable energy within an existing transport network is a challenge which requires an independent and transparent analysis and overview. To be successful, it implies a timely coordination of all stakeholders, ranging from energy production capacity to storage & bunkering logistics in harbours, up to the end-users of inland waterway, maritime transport and related waterborne transport activities. Key information regarding each stakeholder and their characteristics in terms of technical readiness, emission level, actual transport capacity, costs, scalability and impact are available. Putting all parts of the puzzle together is the aim of the present project.

The NEEDS consortium will develop and subsequently apply scenario simulation techniques which will include, inter alia, regional information on transport network and hindcast data of weather conditions (for regional energy production), to simulate different scenarios of sustainable fuel deployment. Forcing certain variables as input into the model in order to study its impact on various quantities, will facilitate evaluating the viability of certain scenarios and identifying potential bottlenecks and best tactics to overcome them.

This dynamic techno-economic model is aimed at helping the European Commission (EC), the Member-States, the regional waterborne transport communities as well as the upstream (fuel/energy-related) stakeholders to evaluate the most efficient pathways towards their energy transition, for both local and regional scale. The amount of details brought into the parameters of the model will allow to run such simulation from micro to macro scale.

The model will primarily focus on variables and parameters related to the waterborne community. However, it will have an open structure that will allow to possibly include other sources of energy needs in the future, depending on the evolution of the market and sector inputs.

Moreover, the project will greatly benefit from the recommendations to be provided by its advisory body, i.e. the STEERER Network (SN), which comprises of a group of experts from various organisations across Europe, covering different segments and activities of the waterborne transport sector. It has initially functioned as the advisory body of the H2020 project Structuring Towards Zero Emission Waterborne Transport (STEERER)<sup>2</sup>. This project advised the ZEWTP Partnership on updating its Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), thus paved the way for the NEEDS project via two main activities:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.waterborne.eu/partnership/partnership>

<sup>2</sup> <https://waterborne.eu/projects/coordination-projects/steerer/>



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- its work on the sector's decarbonization targets by 2050;
- the proposed solutions to achieve the zero-emission targets, part of which involve the extensive uptake and use of sustainable alternative fuels (SAFs) and their associated technologies (propulsion, storage, bunkering, etc.).

The presence of the STEERER Network will therefore offer not only expertise but also a continuity in terms of how the wider waterborne transport sector is following and advising on the research, development and innovation (RD&I) activities stemming from or in connection to the ZEWT Partnership.

Project NEEDS has a budget of €523,437 and is coordinated by MARIN with its consortium, which spans over five European countries, consisting of six other organisations, namely SINTEF, EICB, CERTH, BALance, WaterborneTP and SEA Europe. The project is scheduled to have a duration of 18 months, beginning on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2022.



## 2. Scope of the Deliverable

Deliverable D5.1 Communication and Dissemination Action Plan describes the matured communication and dissemination strategy of the project, as compared to the ideas outlined in the proposal phase.

The deliverable thus encompasses the overall Communication and Dissemination (C&D) strategy of the project. It therefore lists in the chapters and subchapters below: the project C&D objectives, types of communication and dissemination tools, channels and activities to be exploited, the foreseen recording of activities (including events) and general timeline, the target audiences, key performance indicators (KPIs), partners' main responsibilities, etc.

With this document the partners will ensure that the appropriate actions are envisaged and then implemented to inform, engage, create awareness and promote the project, its aims, funding source, outputs and impacts, as well as part of its wider longer-term implications beyond the project's naturally lifetime and engaged community.

The Communication and Dissemination strategy presented here is not, in itself, static and shall be subject to updates and tweaks whenever deemed necessary, based on the project developments and the target audiences. Nonetheless, it will serve as the backbone of NEEDS' Communication and Dissemination strategy and actions to be carried out.



## 3. Main Communication and Dissemination Objectives

The main communication and dissemination objective of the project are:

- create a distinct visual identity for the project;
- ensure that the waterborne transport community is duly informed and attracted to monitor and/or support project activities, i.e. being not only open in receiving project information, but actively following project progress and results;
- extend the outreach to and gain the interest of additional stakeholders from other sectors that are connected to the project's activities – e.g. companies and organizations from the logistics sector, energy sector, etc.;
- maintain and cooperate with the STEERER Network, a dedicated advisory body encompassing waterborne transport experts from various types of organizations and sector segments, which has been inherited from the STEERER project. The experts will ensure the provision of not only advice for the project developments, but will also be part of the project dissemination activities. In this case, their involvement will be two-fold, i.e. they will act as one of the dissemination targets, while being at the same time replicators and carriers of some of the NEEDS dissemination messages targeting the broader sector;
- ensure timely, targeted and high-quality communication with the ZEWT Partnership and its project as well as other relevant RD&I projects;
- ensure timely, targeted and high-quality communication with EC representatives (DG RTD, DG MOVE, DG ENER, etc.);
- promote the existence and use of the NEEDS modelling tool, which will help the sector better prepare for the transition towards sustainable alternative fuels in various EU regions.

These targets will be achieved through:

- specifying target audiences and tailor the dissemination products so as to meet their needs;
- selecting the appropriate communication means and channels for reaching out to all different members of the target audience;
- providing electronic and printed information material, and developing mechanisms for the effective dissemination of those materials;
- identifying the best opportunities (e.g. events, exhibitions, conferences, etc.) and timing for dissemination.

A detailed account of how these goals will be achieved is provided in the following chapters.





## 4. The Target Audience

The group of stakeholders active in waterborne transport-related research is very broad and diverse and consists of, among others, vessel owners/operators, shipbuilders, equipment manufacturers, ports, infrastructure managers, research bodies, universities, etc. For the purpose of this research and in order to simplify the project approach, the main actors were consolidated into the following four main groups:

- **Transport operators:** ship owners, vessel operators, charterers, port and terminal operators, etc.;
- **Technology suppliers:** equipment manufacturers, shipyards, etc.;
- **Public bodies :** port and other transport authorities, maritime regulatory authorities, infrastructure managers, ministries, EU and national institutions as well as the Rhine and Danube Commissions, etc.;
- **Research bodies** (both public and private): universities, research centres, etc.

It must be mentioned that interaction with sector stakeholders will not only take place directly, i.e. from organization to organization, but also in the context of relevant EU-funded research projects, and in particular the ones that are funded via the ZEWT Partnership. This approach is necessary since NEEDS is itself a ZEWT project, thus one of its main purposes is to also ensure that the wider Partnership targets can be achieved.

Besides the aforementioned four target groups, NEEDS will also interact with a few other types of stakeholders that, although not properly part of the waterborne transport sector, play a huge role in the 'upstream' operations, in particular energy-related ones. Consequently, the additional audiences of NEEDS are:

- energy providers and refineries;
- energy or other inland infrastructure managers;
- other equipment providers (for the abovementioned types of stakeholders);
- logistics stakeholders;
- banks;
- the general public.

Special attention will be paid to all these stakeholder categories that are present in the two geographical areas that NEEDS activities focus on: i.e. the Greek coastal shipping network and the Rhine basin.

The SN members can also be counted as a separate target audience, given their privileged access to the draft documentation of the project and the opportunities to influence it.



## 5. Communication Channels and Tools

### 5.1 The NEEDS Visual Identity

In order to be easily identified and stand out for all stakeholder categories as well as the general public, the project must develop its own, unique visual identity. This is not only a pillar of the external communication, but also a basic pre-requisite for the internal communication and exchange of information between project partners.

To this end, the partners had created:

- a project logo;
- project documentation templates: MS Word and PowerPoint.

The elements of visual identity have been created, and lie at the foundation of the other dissemination materials to be used by the project and described in this deliverable. A more detailed description of the visual identity can be found in deliverable D5.2 Communication and Dissemination Tools.

### 5.2 Communication and Dissemination Materials

NEEDS will benefit from a number of such materials throughout its lifetime. Some of them have already been produced.

Such materials can be divided into two major categories: online dissemination materials and printed or physical dissemination materials. There is also an overlap between the two, since many of the online dissemination materials can also be printed, if the context requires it.

The online communication and dissemination materials of the NEEDS project are:

- **the project general presentation**, using the aforementioned PowerPoint template. It is designed to give the general overview of the project and its main developments during different types of events, where all the previously identified stakeholder categories can be addressed. This presentation will be updated throughout the project lifetime, incorporating all main advancements;
- **the project website**. For making good use of the available financial resources and also to ensure visual and content synergies with other RD&I waterborne transport projects – in particular those from the ZEWT Partnership – it was decided to incorporate the project's website into the website of the WATERBORNE Technology Platform ([www.waterborne.eu](http://www.waterborne.eu)). The website will be sustained for the whole duration of the project as well as beyond that, serving as an easy access point for retrieving all project information, major developments and final results. This approach will help in particular disseminating project progress and outcomes to the EU waterborne transport community, while its ease of access will be beneficial for any interested party, including the general public. KPI: at least 800 unique visitors by the end of the project;
- **social media accounts**. Accounts in LinkedIn and Twitter have already been set-up ([LinkedIn account](#), [Twitter account](#)) aiming to provide regular newsfeed and relevant information to followers. Project partners intend to be very active on social media given the enhanced networking / information sharing opportunities that these provide, and the



two platforms are to be used in a complementary way exploiting the benefits that each one provides. KPI: at least 100 followers for each of the accounts on LinkedIn and Twitter. More specifically:

- LinkedIn, a business/professional social media channel where professional information and messages are shared. News items and results of Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects, WaterborneTP or other waterborne transport stakeholders are already widely disseminated on LinkedIn. This will help target all relevant professional stakeholder categories;
- Twitter, which is becoming more and more a news roll media sending out news items. NEEDS will use Twitter to send out news items and tag relevant other news media and stakeholders in the messaging, helping with the outreach for both the professional and the general public. This channel is seen as particularly useful in relation to both the EU and national policy-makers.
- **e-newsletters.** These will be prepared and shared on a regular basis to the project's target audience via the different communication and dissemination tools that have been established – partners' databases, social media accounts, etc. They will help keeping interested stakeholders up-to-date on project advancements, interim results achieved, events that were held or are upcoming, etc. They will also be created using an online version of the NEEDS template. KPI: four e-newsletters to be issued during the course of the project;
- **project videos.** Videos tend to be preferred by several stakeholders, since within a few minutes they can get a good (visual) overview of a project's scope, objectives, activities and key results achieved. A short, general video will be produced during the first part of the project, providing a brief overview of the project's scope, objectives and expected results drawing. A second, longer video will be developed at the last stage of the project efficiently summarizing all the work that will have been done and the key results / outputs that will have been generated by the project partners. Videos are an essential means to promote the project to the professional public but even more so to the general one. KPI: min. 500 views on all channels (YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.) for each video;
- **press releases.** A couple of press releases will be created to better attract the attention towards key project developments and help establish a good relationship with the media (journalists, specialised online media outlets, etc.). Two press releases are foreseen for the project mid-term and final events, but others could be published for significant project progress, such as major deliverables or the NEEDS modelling tool;
- **articles.** Further to the press releases, the NEEDS partners will investigate other ways to promote the project via media relations. In particular, they will assess the opportunity to publish one or more articles in both professional and policy-oriented magazines based on the project developments.

The more detailed description of these materials can be found in D5.2, hence their presentation in a general manner in this deliverable.

Complementary to the online dissemination materials, NEEDS also benefits from printed dissemination materials which will be used to target the different stakeholder categories, waterborne or non-waterborne transport, that are present in different events. These are:

- the project leaflets. A tri-fold leaflet was designed and produced at the start of the project aiming to introduce the project to its recipients. It includes in a comprehensive manner:



the project rationale and main drivers, its objectives and key activities, and the expected results. Should the need arise and the financial resources be available, the partners can create later in the project a new leaflet, to present the main progress;

- a project roll-up.

As with the online dissemination materials, the printed ones are also described in more detail in D5.2.

### 5.3 Events

A very important channel for dissemination to the research community is the organisation of or participation in conferences by: holding presentations, participating as experts, taking part in panel discussions, presenting papers, etc. This event organization and/or presence will also be supported by the ideas and materials outlined in the sections above.

NEEDS foresees the organisation of dedicated events that will help in disseminating the messages and discussing the project progress. Firstly, a mid-term and a final conference are scheduled to be organized. Furthermore, partners can also organize smaller events, targeted on specific topics and/or stakeholder categories. The most important information from these events, including the presentations done, will also be made available through the project website.

Moreover, the SN meetings will also be part of this dissemination effort, though this is only a secondary purpose in their case. They are foreseen to be organized online, though the hybrid or fully in-person options are also on the table.

Below is a list of identified events where NEEDS is proposed to be presented by the project partners throughout its lifetime; some of these presentations had already taken place. Partners' participation will be either in-person or online, depending on the best option identified. The list below will also be kept as a separate, 'living' document. It will be updated throughout the lifetime of the project with newly identified opportunities as well as the events attends.

The partners' activities in relation to these event will target in particular the waterborne transport community, but will also include EU and national policy-makers, other relevant professional stakeholders and the general public. SN meetings are excluded from this list.

Lead Partner(s)	Contributing Partners	Event	Date(s)	Location
<b>CERTH &amp; MARIN</b>		EUShippingBCE	19 September 2022	Athens, Greece
<b>MARIN, WAT, EICB</b>		STEERER GSEG Final Meeting	21-22 Sept 2022	Brussels, Belgium
<b>MARIN</b>		MARIN 2022 R&D Seminar	2 November 2022	Wageningen, the Netherlands
<b>MARIN</b>		International Academic Conference on Shipping,	2 March 2023	Hamburg, Germany



		Sustainability & Solutions 2023		
<b>SPB, WAT, MARIN</b>	All	ITS Lisbon	22-24 May 2023	Lisbon, Portugal
<b>MARIN, SINTEF</b>	All	BlueWeek2023	19 April 2023	Palma de Mallorca, Spain
<b>SPB</b>	All	Maritime Industry	23-25 May 2023	Gorinchem
<b>WAT &amp; MARIN</b>	All	NEEDS Mid-term Event	TBD	TBD
<b>BAL</b>	All	ESPO Conference	2-3 June 2023	Bremen, Germany
<b>CERTH (tbd)</b>	All	Marine Environment TRB Standing Committee, U.S. Transportation Research Board	June 2023	Washington D.C., USA
<b>WAT</b>	All	WaterborneTP Townhall meeting	June 2023	Brussels/online (tbc)
<b>BAL</b>	All	National Maritime Conference, Germany	14-15 Sept 2023	Germany
<b>WAT</b>	All	Waterborne Days	26-27 Sept 2023	Brussels, Belgium
<b>CERTH</b>	All	11 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Transportation Research	September 2023	Heraklion, Greece
<b>WAT &amp; MARIN</b>	All	NEEDS Final Event	October 2023	Brussels (tbc)
<b>SPB/WAT/MARIN</b>	All	EUROPORT	07-10 -Nov 2023	Rotterdam
<b>SPB/WAT/MARIN</b>	All	ICMASS	09-10 Nov 2023	Rotterdam
<b>WAT</b>	All	WaterborneTP Townhall meeting	November 2023	Brussels/online (tbc)

KPI: presenting NEEDS in min. 10 events throughout its lifetime (not including the SN meetings).

## 5.4 The NEEDS Modelling Tool

One of the main results of the NEEDS project will be the modelling tool developed by MARIN with the help of the project partners. While this key achievement is firstly a content, working



project result, it will also act as a de facto dissemination tool for the project during its last period, and will be a crucial component of the project's exploitation plan.

Before it will be unveiled to the public, the NEEDS tool will be a main driver for interacting with and achieving feedback from relevant stakeholders. Moreover, the project aim is to see how to integrate this tool in the work of other stakeholders, such as universities, research centres or the transport authorities.

It will come online towards the end of the project, and will be hosted on the MARIN website, but also benefitting from a link on the NEEDS website from the WaterborneTP platform.

Dedicated, detailed descriptions and explanations will be available via the D1.3 Interactive web portal and D5.6 Plan for the Exploitation of Results, towards the end of the project.

## 5.5 Partners' Responsibilities

All partners contribute to the dissemination work, while some have additional responsibilities based on their roles as Work Packages' leaders.

The main dissemination activities will be undertaken WAT as WP5 leaders and MARIN as project coordinator, with the help of all the partners. All partners have the responsibility, in accordance with the decisions taken at the consortium level, to lead and/or contribute to the different dissemination activities identified. It is also important that all partners include the relevant NEEDS information in their own communication channels and events, in order to best promote the project and its developments.

Given the nature of the project, CERTH and EICB have been assigned the following specific roles:

- CERTH will ensure that the project information is widely disseminated with the Greek stakeholders, as the Greek coastal shipping network is one of the project's study cases;
- EICB will ensure a strong dissemination among the Rhine basin stakeholders, since this is the second study case conducted within the project. The partner will also be in the lead when it comes to the dissemination activities in the IWT segment.

Another specific role is that WAT will be in the lead in terms of communications between the project and the ZEWT Partnership, including the other RD&I waterborne transport projects that are funded through the partnership.

Furthermore, each partner can propose throughout the lifetime of the project additional activities. These would need to be discussed at the consortium level, to review the message(s) and target audience(s), the necessary budget, etc. One exception concerns the potential intellectual property rights (IPR) aspects: the partner owning the IPR on the ideas/materials that are shared has a veto on declining dissemination of the material. Partners are encouraged to take the *de facto* lead on the communication of some messages and/or to some stakeholder groups based on their organization type, waterborne transport segments covered, experience in communications, etc.



All partners have to regularly communicate on the implementation of the different communication activities, so that there is a clear and detailed track of the activities done.

Concerning the communication with the EC, this is the responsibility of MARIN. All issues that must be raised with the Project Officer will be raised through MARIN. Also, reversely, issues to be raised to the consortium or individual partners by the Project Officer will go through MARIN.

This process is implemented to avoid scattered communications to the stakeholders with potentially largely varying messages, which can also carry inconsistencies. It will also be adjusted in during the project lifetime, if or when needed, based on the experience gathered by the project partners until that moment.



## 6. Conclusion

This deliverable presents the guidelines and detailed overview of the plan for communication and dissemination, to be put in place throughout NEEDS' implementation. The document is a matured step to operationalise the communication and dissemination ideas presented in the GA, however, the ideas presented here will be adapted based on the partners' needs and the project's updates.

This document serves as the framework under which the communication and dissemination work will be carried out and is a means to an end, rather than the end itself. And given both the size and length of the project, the endeavour of reaching all the target audiences will be a key activity made by the partners.