



Communication Master Plan

A framework for communicating and connecting in the NextGen project

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Executive Summary

Communication, collaboration and engagement are **pillars of excellence and innovation on a par with our technical endeavours**. Project communications are vital to supporting NextGen goals and will specifically seek to facilitate NextGen's significant broader ambitions:

- (1)** Promote active engagement and knowledge sharing between 10 demonstration sites, project partners, 30 end users, a range of professional stakeholders and engage with 50,000 citizens
- (2)** Boost external communication and promotion of the project evidence base, case studies, experiences and outcomes, so as to widely promote the principals of NEXTGEN; and
- (3)** Aide establishment of a knowledge legacy, through an on-going platform to promote and share project principals, support creation of 3 new spin offs, exploit new business opportunities and 200 long-term jobs in water supply.

A range of accessible and compelling content delivered using the latest visual, digital, video and journalistic techniques will aim to stimulate targeted expert and non-expert audiences: from NextGen Communities of Practice and living labs to local schools and residents. An additional layer of international outreach and collaboration will further support replication and international commercial success of European expertise. The WP will be coordinated by ESCI, with substantial strategic input from CTM, WSSTP, KWR and IVL plus support from all partners.

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Creating Lasting Impact

NextGen will create impact with communications actions to public and non-expert audiences that **build trust and accelerate transition** to circular water solutions. We will take pockets of proven performance and **share the knowledge and tools to make new innovations mainstream**. Our mission is to do this across multiple on-line and in person channels using a creative mix of compelling and coherent content

Communication Approach

NextGen aims to create impact with **communications actions that build trust - accelerate transition - make a sustainable change** by meeting the following key objectives:

- Tell the 'NextGen story' and bring the circular economy transition to life through NextGen initiatives, toolkit and evidence base using a lively editorial calendar, appropriate language and innovative communications channels and tools
- Give a voice to people and organisations from across the spectrum and explore a range of behaviours, motivations and patterns of engagement and change
- Support NextGen's Responsible Research & Innovation (RRI) approach at every opportunity
- Prioritise places and channels where our audiences already gather – on and offline to get a greater audience – including mass TV media
- Capitalise on the networks and spheres of influence within the consortium
- Illustrate the credibility and personalities behind NextGen to citizens and stakeholders and establish trust by showing our intent, integrity and capacity for results
- Deliver a rolling flow of relevant news and content pushed to multiple communications channels
- Mix textual and rational written material with visual and emotional video supports
- Work with NextGen demo sites to localise content and overcome language and cultural barriers

To increase European wide understanding and support for circular economy solutions, NextGen will produce original, quality content and leverage ESCI's network of science and technology based journalists and producers to access mainstream media distribution

Including:

- A series of medium form articles produced by independent journalists
- Interviews with circular economy and water solution expert voices
- Video News Releases (VNRs) tailored for international TV broadcasters

Dissemination Approach

NextGen aims to achieve a maximum transfer of information and shareable research results to the professional audiences that can best make use of it. Project outputs must create awareness, understanding and incite action to accelerate take up of water systems and services for the circular economy - including well after the funding period.

At a pan-European level, *NextGen* will play a leadership role in reaching a broad audience of professionals, practitioners, policy makers and the scientific community, fuelled by the significant outputs and publicly available deliverables. The project has a rich set of dissemination channels and opportunities to exploit and empower with key messages, communications resources and engaging content:

- Extensive demo site, individual, organisational and collective professional networks and spheres of influence to tap into
- A governance framework for stakeholder engagement at each demo site to help identify and involve the whole water value chain - including end-users and the general public
- Communities of Practice providing a natural and collaborative environment to reach representatives of social, industrial, business, cultural and policy aspects
- Targeted co-creation around specific innovations and sites, exploiting the concept of Living Labs will give direct access to users, public, private and knowledge institutes in a trusting, open environment
- Detailed thematic key takeaways and best practices profiled in case studies in several demo sites
- Multi faceted involvement and connections with Government organisations (National bodies, OECD etc.) NGOs (Ellen McArthur Foundation, WssTP etc.) and stakeholder platforms (EIP etc.)
- An international commercial network and reach targeting India and China as priority markets

To enable use of and increase uptake, NextGen commits to making nearly all deliverables public, fully supporting Open Access and embracing Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) practices. The project is a key contributor to developing a European Roadmap for Water in the Circular Economy

Including:

- Low threshold meetings and editorial content
- Strong ethics governance
- Inclusive and transparent stakeholder engagement

NextGen Communication & Dissemination essentials


<i>From knowledge economy to broad socio-ecological transition: NextGen communication & dissemination essentials</i>	
<p>WHAT to communicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Compelling, credible and trusted written content for distribution to high-volume media & networks ✓ Clear and credible results, outcomes and experiences ✓ Powerful visual content ✓ Education and interaction opportunities with NextGen ✓ Features, Advantages, Challenges and Benefits of NextGen initiatives for each specific target audience 	 <p><i>Q-Helix Actors Relationship Diagram Credit: Karel Rodriguez</i></p> <p>TO WHOM: a quintuple helix ecosystem of interdependent and connected audiences, each with their own viewpoints, storylines, objectives, testimonials and target audiences at both European and local/regional level</p>
<p>HOW to communicate - channels:</p> <p><u>Earned:</u> ESCI network of 500+ mass media editors, journalists and broadcasters—plus professional media outlets. NextGen CoPs. Demosite eco-system relationships, local innovation hubs, living labs and media networks. Citizen engagement activities.</p> <p><u>Shared:</u> Partnerships with EU platforms, national and international awareness initiatives (i.e. EIP Water, WISE, World Water Day etc.) distribution to mass media, twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, syndicated content</p> <p><u>Owned:</u> Expert interviews, consortium generated content, professional journalist produced articles, news releases, presentations, info graphics, videos – from professional news releases to social broadcasting.</p>	

Figure 1: NextGen communication & dissemination essentials

Project Branding

An attractive and consistent visual identity will facilitate meeting communication and dissemination objectives and reflect project values and goals. This includes logos, info graphics and standard templates such as PowerPoint presentations, Word report styles and letterheads. It also advises the consortium on correct acknowledgements of EU funding and EU flag. A strong and dynamic visual identity is important in many ways, notably:

Professionally - to:

- Provide an easily identifiable and attractive design to facilitate dialogue and recognition with key stakeholders and influencers
- Give a brand platform for improved market knowledge of NextGen solutions to support replication and take up – possibly including continued commercial development and investment well beyond the lifetime of the project
- Enhance exploitation potential of research, business models and innovations
- Support collaboration activities with relevant projects and initiatives at a local, nation and European or international level

Publicly – to:

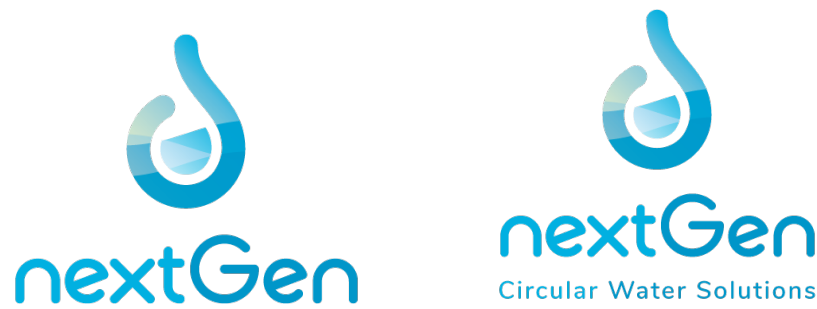
- Support local communication initiatives and engagement particularly at demonstration sites and interventions
- Develop an identifier of investment, change and progress for local stakeholders, citizens and residents to be proud of
- Encapsulate the momentum of moving towards a circular economy

Logo

A logo has been designed to give a striking and memorable visual identity for the project.

Two versions have been produced, with and without the tagline, “Circular Water Solutions” to be used as needed. Along with the logos, an overall visual identity was developed including graphics and icons for key NextGen actions and themes.

The Logo must not be altered or adapted by project partners, but used in its current form. Care must be taken to not distort the dimensions of the Logo.



The logos are also available in horizontal format, again with or without the tag line, as such:



Figure 2: NextGen logos

Colour palette

A range of complementary colours has been pre-defined to help ESCI and project partners continue the visual continuity while adding some variety. Additional colours to challenge the predominant blues or convey several levels of information may be added as needed.

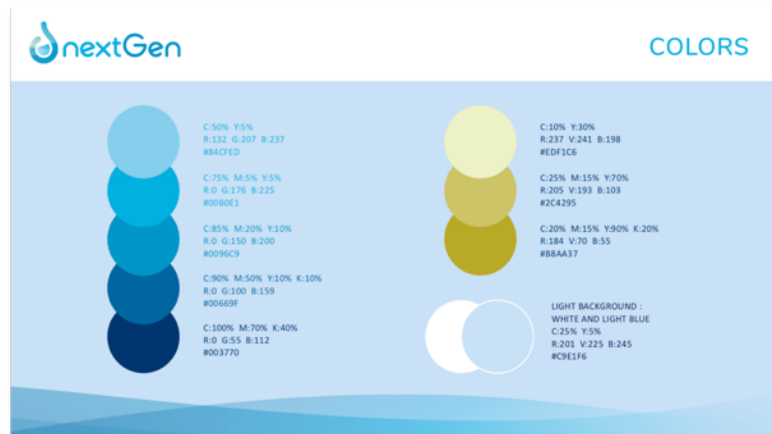


Figure 3: Colour Palette

Templates

Word and PowerPoint templates have been designed to ensure that communications remain true to the common visual identity. Consistent visual and written style is important for ensuring project recognition and delivering a professional communications effort. Templates have been distributed to project partners and available on designated SharePoint.



Figure 4: PowerPoint templates



Figure 5: Word deliverable template

To span off and online branding, a set of social media banners and logo icons for use on LinkedIn, twitter and Facebook has also been developed.



Figure 6: Social media banner template

European Commission Acknowledgement

The support of the European Commission must be recognised in all publications and outputs produced by the NextGen project. For example:

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N°776541

Or, in the introduction to a text: *The research leading to these results received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N°776541*

Where possible, the EU logo should also be displayed, according to the rules set out by the European Commission.¹ Relevant logos and instructions available on project SharePoint.

Written identity and key messages

Whether communicating online or via other means, it is essential to provide a clear and concise overview of NextGen scope, ambition and targets. To this end, a written identity provides a resource for accurate and consistent internal and external publications, documentation and communications.

The written identity can be translated in other languages for local dissemination and communication purposes; and supports the unique local audiences and objectives across the city ecosystems.

At this very early stage of the project (M4), the written identity and key messages are still evolving. Working with the consortium, developing editorial and achieving monitored performance targets will mean this is a 'live' exercise in close collaboration with local sites.

¹ Graphical Guide to the European Emblem: <http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000100.htm>

Our ambition

The next generation of managing our most important resource

NextGen evaluates and champions transformational circular economy solutions and systems around resource use in the water sector. We aim to **challenge embedded thinking and practices** by bringing financially sustainable innovations to life.

To achieve this, NextGen will deliver **technological, business and governance solutions for water** in ten high profile demonstration cases across Europe and three associate partners worldwide.

We aim to accelerate, transfer and upscale circular economy practices worldwide by **sharing our collective experiences and insights** in citizen and stakeholder engagement, business models and services. A market place and targeted development of spin off activities will **commercialise effective solutions**.

Solutions being explored and tested include:

- Advanced treatment technologies and nature-inspired storage to optimise water resources
- Managing and recovering energy more efficiently to turn treatment plants into positive energy generators; and
- Ground breaking nutrient mining and reuse that create new products from waste streams

NextGen is an active and willing supporter of the [EU Circular Economy Package](#) and contributor to a future European Roadmap for Water in the Circular Economy.

About the project

The project will **asses, design and demonstrate** a wide range of water-embedded resources, including

- ❖ **Water** itself with reuse at multiple scales supported by nature-based storage, optimal management strategies, advanced treatment technologies, engineered ecosystems and compact/mobile/scalable systems
- ❖ **Energy** combined water-energy management, treatment plants as energy factories, water-enabled heat transfer, storage and recovery for allied industries and commercial sectors; and

- ❖ **Materials** such as nutrient mining and reuse, manufacturing new products from waste streams, regenerating and repurposing membranes to reduce water reuse costs, and producing activated carbon from sludge to minimise costs of micro-pollutant removal

An integral part of deploying NextGen solutions will be to **define and cultivate the framework conditions for success**:

- ❖ Involving and engaging citizens and other stakeholders to give feedback on technology development, increase collective learning and shape solutions and behavioural change using communities of practice and living labs. Serious gaming and augmented reality will be immersive tools to explore the circular economy and behaviour change.
- ❖ Addressing social and governance challenges to ensure long-term adoption and support for circular economy solutions. This includes social acceptability testing, policy and regulation support and development of a European Roadmap for Water in Circular Economy

Last but not least, NextGen will **explore new business models and support market creation** with three key initiatives:

- ❖ A thorough analysis, profiling and sharing of business models and services for water solutions in the circular economy
- ❖ An online marketplace allowing users to explore NextGen showcases and demo case technologies
- ❖ Business and marketing support to exploit the extensive new opportunities revealed by adopting a circular economy approach

Additional key messaging to be developed during the course of the project may include:

- **Local** messaging – reflecting context, concerns and language – will be equally important, especially in the delivery of WP3 stakeholder and citizen engagement
- **Commercial** messaging to support European and international market creation targeted in WP5
- **Policy focused** messaging to support the development of an EU roadmap and activities in collaboration with WssTP, KWR, Strane and other relevant partners

Target Audiences and Segmentation

As a large-scale demonstration project, a primary focus of the **NextGen** consortium is to achieve a maximum transfer of information and shareable research results to the professional audiences that can best make use of it. Given that the circular economy is driven by fundamental shifts to mindset and collaboration, this may be a dynamic, changing and widespread group of actors, rather than a siloed, simple target audience.

Critical audiences for the projects' knowledge feature a pan-European spread in order of:

- **Water professionals and practitioners**
- **Policy makers**
- **The scientific community** and – notably for a critical and sensitive area such as water
- **Public outreach and acceptance in civil society.**

The table below attempts to pinpoint some of these in more detail, identify and attribute their place in the systems change we seek to achieve:

Figure 7: Stakeholder groups & target audiences

Stakeholder group	Example Target Group	Relevance to NextGen	Example NextGen outcome Short & long term
ENABLER <i>Framework instigator</i>	Regional government Local authority agency EU and International policy makers	Identify bottlenecks & optimise system Economic development & financing Environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing and validation of NextGen business modelling techniques • Mass take up of NextGen integrated solutions
PROVIDOR <i>Knowledge ecosystem</i>	University Research & Technology Organisation Innovation professionals (ie Living labs)	Knowledge application and distribution Grow body of knowledge Support new technology, awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend NextGen stakeholder workshop • New innovative integration of water systems solutions proposed
UTILISER <i>Value partners</i>	ICT company & developers Start-ups, SMEs & industries ESCOs, Consultancy firms Materials and energy companies	Primary users in new markets and of innovation Improve products, profitability and skill in field Collaborators and catalysts for delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 long term qualified jobs in water supply • 3 new spin offs
END USER <i>Point of delivery & uptake/failure</i>	Citizens and directly concerned residents Visitors, tourists NGOs, civil society	Key to sustainable service and product design Provides feedback and improvement loops Vital to success/failure of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of NextGen serious gaming • Sustainable behaviour change over time
FACILITATOR <i>Financial provisions</i>	Investors and VCs Public and private finance institutions Private industries on PPP and other contracts	Navigate complex financing issues Ensure NextGen and replication projects are sustainable and achievable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective solutions for circular economy and water systems • Proven models, results and relationships to facilitate finance in the future

Transversal segments

In addition, **NextGen** is not only working to develop awareness and action in one value chain in transition to a circular economy; but three! While water stakeholders identified above are the critical entry point and target audiences, the project is operating at a nexus of water, materials and energy.

Not all of these processes are directly targeted, but transversal segments to target with **NextGen** knowledge and outputs include: food and fodder, nutrient and material markets, biogas, electricity and heat providers and the consumer food industry.

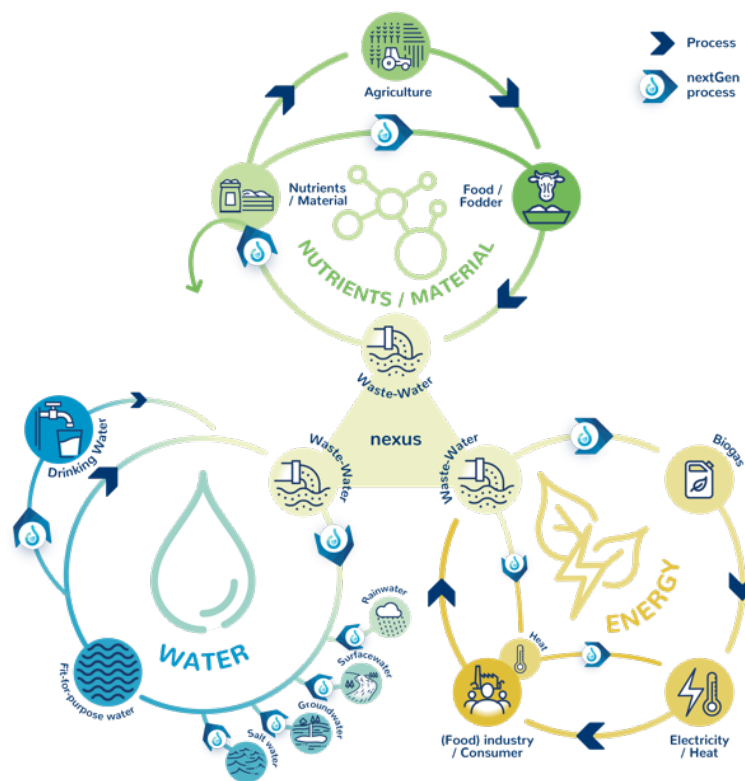


Figure 8: NextGen nexus audience segments and solutions

Specific dissemination and communication actions to reach these audiences may multiply entry points in the number of trade press publications, trade shows, professional associations and even LinkedIn groups, for example, to interact with. While this adds additional effort, it also adds opportunity, especially for a substantiated, NextGen Technology Evidence Base of solutions and deliverables. Promoting these resources will help establish a knowledge legacy as an ongoing platform to promote and share the principals of the project to connect the circular economy and the nexus between water, energy and materials.

Business segments

NextGen has a high exploitation for scalable results and new business opportunities within a circular economy in all three of the projects key areas – materials, energy, water – and beyond.

In conjunction with exploitation partner Strane Innovation, dissemination and communication will support actions towards business, exploitation and investment opportunities in water industry and industrial sectors with interest in reusing water. A number of specific segments, such as agricultural and chemical will be fertile target audiences for the project technology evidence base, business case studies and even spin off incubation.

Market	Size
WWTP facilities	More than 60.000 WWTP existing in EU to be upgraded as Circular Economy production facilities.
Flower industry	The flower industry is global. It follows a growing long-term trend but is highly sensible to economic cycles. The global market is around 20bn\$.
Agriculture	The agricultural good output in Europe amounts to €360bn in 2015. Fertilisers and soil improvers and Energy cost respectively €16bn and €25bn . Circular economy could help reduce such costs and increase farmers' margins which are notoriously low.
Chemical industry	The European chemical industry amounts to €519bn, and the global chemical industry to €3,534bn . It supplies a lot of economic sectors: rubber and plastics, construction, paper, automotive, metals, textiles, machinery, food and beverages, publishing, furniture, etc. It is related to economic cycles and overall globally growing.
Tourism	The direct (respectively indirect) contribution to the Europe's GDP of the travel and tourism industry was €779bn (respectively €2,136bn) in Europe.
Food and beverages	The food and drink industry generated a total turnover of €1,089bn in 2016 . The sector is made of 289 000 companies.

Figure 9: Business target audiences, NextGen exploitation markets

For these business segments, tangible proof points and results as a cornerstone communication piece is key. Again, deliverables in the Technology Evidence Base and marketplace.

WP6 lead and key partners in exploitation and demonstration sites and will have to assess relative strength and promise of deliverables, monitoring results and business potential to prioritise which of these areas is deserving of the most focus. Discussions with Water Europe for business market place events in target segments may also support this.

The project has high ambitions to support creation of three new spin offs, new business opportunities and 200 long-term jobs in water supply. Effective dissemination and communication to these market segment targets will be essential to cultivating understanding, interest and trust to make them a reality.

International segments

India, China and Korea are international target markets for both academic and commercial dissemination and communication of NextGen.



The project has partners in South-Korea (KIST working on Biogas production directly from municipal wastewater and food wastewater), India (TSWO working on Harvesting fog and dew for irrigation), and China (JIEI Wastewater treatment with energy and nutrient recovery).

Several exchanges have taken place in various events, forums, and network meetings since the beginning of the project, starting with meetings at the IWA Congress and Circular Economy Congress in Tokyo, Japan. These connections will be further strengthened through the international Watershare network, IVL liaison offices and major international Congress channels.

Further detail in **Outreach and commercial success beyond the EU** section below

Civil Society and the public

NextGen targets a number of direct citizen involvements as a circular economy requires a common change of mentality and behavior to create an economic system that uses resources more intelligently and respectfully.

Achieving this shared mindset shift is key and why it is essential to get all involved parties around the table, listen to each other and act jointly. The project practices an approach called “Communities of Practice” (CoP) as a method to establish a circular water economy in the long term with economic advantages, social and ecological side effects that benefit us all.

These communities of practice are being deployed at a number of demonstration sites. Communication actions, such as infographics, print materials, case studies and visual supports will help increase their effectiveness.

Collaborating with EU policy and policy professional segments follows below as part of the activities lead by Water Europe – a leading advocacy and exchange platform for the water sector, based in Brussels.

Planned Activities

Collaborating with EU policy

NextGen possesses a dynamic and international consortium connected to numerous research and policy fora. While many are active, connect with relevant EC and other initiatives to disseminate the knowledge generated during the project will be led by Water Europe. The European Commission initiated WE in 2004 for Research and Technology Development in the water industry and it retains a status as one of the best-performing European Technology Platforms (ETPs). Their communication channels, members and – above all – events, will be a forum for extending and testing solutions and inputs to the European Union Roadmap for Water in the Circular Economy.

Water Europe advocates for new EU policies to develop systemic solutions and approaches towards healthy waters bodies, secure and resilient water management infrastructures and the secure availability of the right water quality for the right use within a sustainably circular society.

In this context, a number of activities are foreseen in the framework of the Nextgen project, such as the participation and exposure of the project in the Water Innovation Europe conferences, Water Europe's annual event that brings together high-level decision makers and leading actors and companies from across the whole water value chain. In addition, the core values of the project will be also highlighted in the new series of events Water Europe called Water Projects Europe that aims at fostering collaboration between EU funded projects, develop strategies for the replication, scaling up and market outreach of the outcomes, and to “extract” and valorise components useful to policy building and capacity development.

The COVID-19 crisis in 2020 showed how much critical is the capacity of the EU fundamental systems (water, energy, communication) to be resilient to the emergencies and how much this greatly contributes to the overall stability of our society. Indeed, new policies based on the systemic circularity as a basic principle for the prevention and mitigation of crises and risk prevention are needed.

In this regard, Water Europe will develop of 3 policy briefs on different topics related to the core purpose of the Nextgen Project.

Policy briefs are seen as one of the most effective ways to reach policy and decision-makers. For this reason, NextGen will develop 3 policy briefs for effectively communicating and disseminating NexGen results and recommendations to policy makers on European and local level (countries of the project) and any other relevant stakeholders.

The Policy briefs will concern the following topics:

- 1: Circular Economy and resilient water systems
- 2: A Water Smart Society for the European Green and Digital transition
- 3: Citizens engagement in the new water governance models.

This policy brief will highlight and outline the learnings and recommendations of the project. They will be designed in a P4P (Project for Policy) approach that uses R&I project results to shape policy, ensuring that the NextGen solutions have the best conditions to be implemented in the market. This policy brief will build also on the relevant Nextgen case studies to illustrate the results of the projects and hence facilitate the communication to citizens through the EU and local policymakers.

This way, project results can become an excellent tool for policy makers to:

- provide evidence for policy development and design
- highlight gaps or barriers in current policy frameworks or approaches
- help develop new opportunities and innovative activities for any area of policymaking across Europe and the world.

This dissemination will be based on an active communication by sending directly the information to targeted policymakers:

- relevant DGs at the EU level
- relevant local authorities and decision makers, especially at demonstration sites
- the Committee of Regions and especially the unit on Climate
- any other relevant stakeholders, based on the outcomes of the project.

A broader dissemination to reach academia and additional policymakers will be engaged through:

- social-media and additional online websites and magazines
- communication media in Water Europe to reach the full value chain of the water sector
- participation in Water Innovation Europe and any other relevant events based on the outcomes of the project.

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – WssTP lead

Target audience(s): Policy makers and professions – at EU and local levels

Highlights: The Water Innovation Europe annual event, hosted by WaterEurope, gives NextGen a focused meeting point for industry, policy makers and standardisation actors. Close alignment to European working groups.

Key Outputs: Presentations, poster sessions, widely shared best practices and insights, 3 policy briefs (one per year 2020, 2021 and 2022)

Outreach and commercial success beyond the EU

NextGen has identified cases with high replication potential beyond Europe in alignment to commercial and technical competences in the consortium (e.g. Iran – KWR and India and China – IVL and Biopolus) and will form an international learning and action alliance with them, under the auspices of [Watershare](#) – a worldwide network of water research organisations and utilities. A full range of NextGen communications tools and content will also support raising awareness and engagement among international audiences.

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – IVL lead

Target audience(s): Local governments, water authorities, academia & businesses

Highlights: Leveraging IVL expansion in India and major international congress like IWA Tokyo 2018

Key Outputs: Study tours, face-to-face meetings, conferences and exhibitions



Figure 10: WaterShare booth at IWA World Congress & Exhibition 2018 Tokyo

Targeted case studies

NextGen promotes evidence-based knowledge transfer using targeted case studies and disseminating best practices. Knowledge partners KWR and CTM will collaborate to bring value added analysis and highlight technical, environmental and business opportunities. ESCI NextGen partner WssTP will be central to circulating these throughout the water sector through EU and international instruments. They will support further dissemination content to stakeholder platforms and institutions cited in Task 6.3.

Although not originally intended, due to high interest and the number of demonstration sites, an early collaboration has resulted in a first level of case studies with key context, scope and

figures for each of them. Produced by CTM and ESCI, these exist in poster and PDF formats and made available to partners and online already in M5.

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – CTM lead

Target audience(s): Local governments, water authorities businesses

Highlights: Clear graphics, copy edited by professional journalists to feature on the project website and dissemination and communication channels

Key Outputs: At least seven case studies highlighting specific issues and expertise



Figure 11: Case studies of 10 demonstration sites

Compelling content

Whether online, at an event or in person; original, insightful content is at the heart of NextGen strategy. A variety of **editorial, video and visual content** will be developed to share on digital media channels, media multipliers (newswires, sector press, institutional and partner communications teams), championed by stakeholders and social media influencers. In today's world, the value and interest in the quality of the content, not the channel. By focusing on the message, not the medium we will help create a credible, sustainable interest in NextGen activities and solutions. The immediacy of instant publication and distribution of individual pieces of content with precise metrics on reach and readership is preferred to the slowly redundant and costly production of a 6-monthly newsletter.

Interviews

Throughout the project, key technical experts, end users and stakeholders will respond to quick-fire written and/or video interviews relating to their experiences, ambitions and

challenges in achieving interoperability, optimisation and demand responsive innovations. These will primarily draw on the demonstration site ecosystems and interview people both internal and external to the project's consortium. Three to four interviews per year and a total of 12 will be produced. Initially published on the project website, quotes, images and points of view expressed will drive social media activities and public relations actions.

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – ESCI lead

Target audience(s): dependent on content and focus of commissioned pieces. Local governments, water authorities, academia, businesses, civil society

Highlights: Profile the skills, experiences, credibility and performance of the demonstration sites and project in more detail

Independent articles

A total of eight original journalistic articles will profile the skills, experiences, credibility and performance of the demonstration sites and project in more detail. Always anchored on the project website, they will be shared with influential multiplier websites in specialist media, stakeholder networks and established online groups or platforms like LinkedIn. If the opportunity arises, the articles will be pitched to local, national or international mass media in the European Science Communication Institute network.

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – ESCI lead

Target audience(s): dependent on content and focus of commissioned pieces. Local governments, water authorities, academia, businesses, civil society

Highlights: High quality journalistic content targeting take up by independent and sector media outlets with significant awareness raising results

Key Outputs: Editorial calendar defined on a rolling basis, inspired by key deliverables and achievements of the project



Figure 12: Independent article commissioned

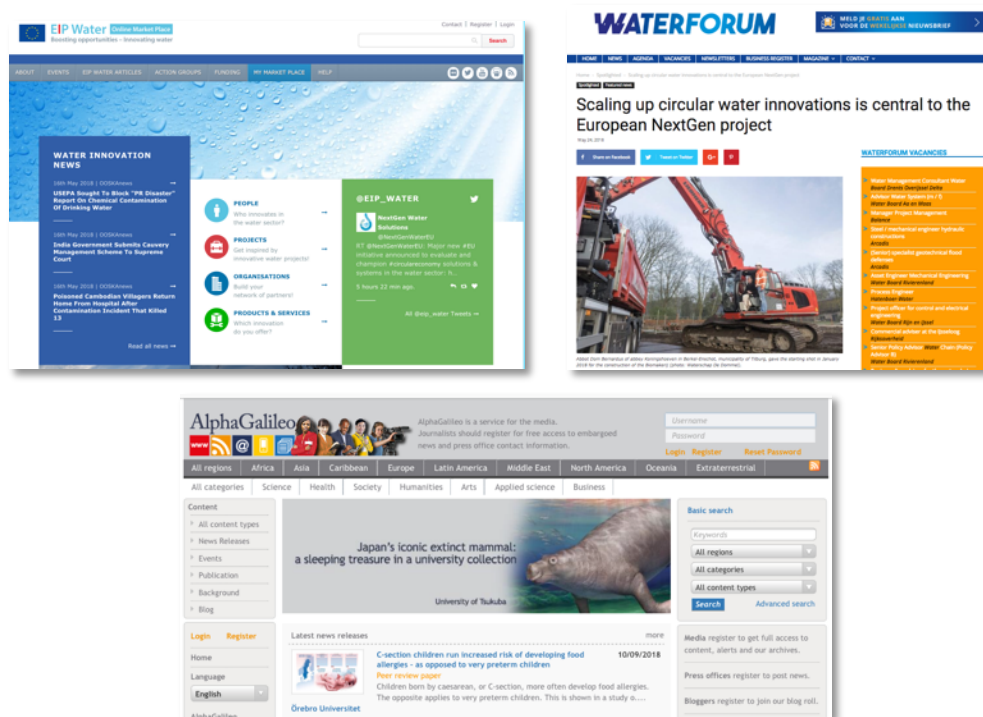


Figure 13: ESCI PR and distribution to key stakeholder/journalist platforms

News bites

Short news bites and blog posts with key NextGen developments and resources to share will be produced regularly and distributed quickly on digital and online media. ESCI journalists and staff work with partners to develop the right story angle and writing style to make it interesting for readers. Event reports may also feature, with key takeaways and interesting resources highlighted. Locally generated and submitted content from partners will provide additional news content for NextGen social media and website.

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – ESCI lead

Target audience(s): focus on water authorities, water professionals, academia.

Highlights: Regular, quality news pieces with insight will fuel NextGen ‘thought leadership’ position and demonstrate consortium dynamism

Key Outputs: An estimated 2 news items a month



Figure 14: Partner-generated news

Info graphics

In a modern multi-channel environment, it is difficult to get someone's attention, to capture his or her imagination, especially in the fast-paced digital world. By working with NextGen content, consortium experts and a lively design team, a series of info graphics on topical and substantive issues will be produced. A total of four info graphics over duration of the contract will be deployed to attract new interest, increase engagement and deliver powerful messages clearly.

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – ESCI lead

Target audience(s): focus on water authorities, demonstration site stakeholders, civil society

Highlights: 90% of the information we remember is visual. Makes complex technical issues more accessible. Easy to share across different media – from PowerPoint to twitter

Key Outputs: Minimum of 6 during the project

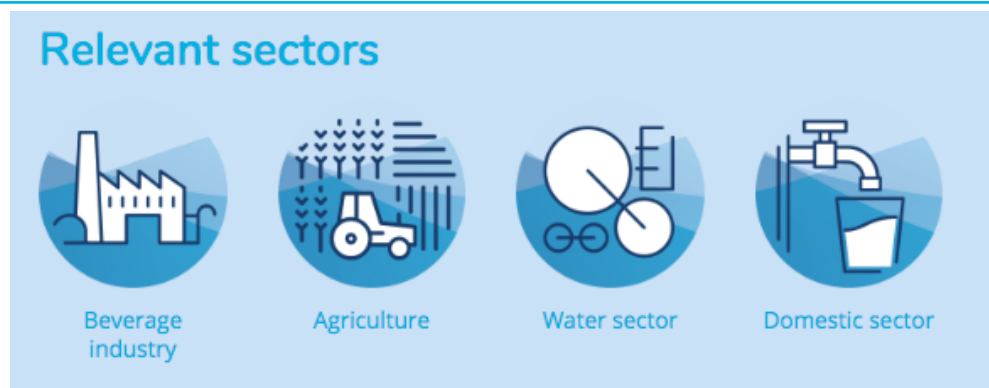


Figure 15: Selection of icons developed

Video News Releases

An experienced team of television journalists will produce two video news releases (VNR) in broadcast quality tailored for international broadcasters to use. The journalists will find the right angle, identify the necessary journalistic hook and have contacts to the TV stations, to bring NextGen to the TV screen and help catapult NextGen's international and replication ambitions forward. ESCI will activate their network of 500+ international TV science journalists to secure dissemination in multiple countries and markets.

Delivery: M13-M60 – ESCI lead

Target audience(s): local government, civil society

Highlights: Professionally devised and produced video content for TV journalists, editors and distributors to use and diffuse in national markets

Outputs: A first news release in the second year of NextGen will set the scene and key challenges, a second news video in year four will bring together all the best threads and results of the project

Website

The website is designed to be a modern and dynamic site that moves away from being a repository for all towards being a 'digital anchor' for NextGen content. Articles, info graphics, interviews, videos and news bites are then pushed, promoted and placed on established websites with in-built audiences, linking back to the site. This frees resources, budget and time for ESCI and NextGen partners to contribute to content and making sure it reaches the largest audience possible. Priority has therefore be given to presenting an easy to update and well connected website with NextGen content featured in the media or sectorial sites, twitter feeds, interviews and blog posts front and centre. The site uses the Word Press publishing platform and its known features for clean and accessible mobile browsing.

This central destination addresses **water professionals, industry and academia** first; with content and consideration for supporting **business links and exploitation**. **Interested citizens** from demonstration site areas will find plenty of content; but are considered only a **tertiary target audience**.



Figure 16: Mobile site cover page

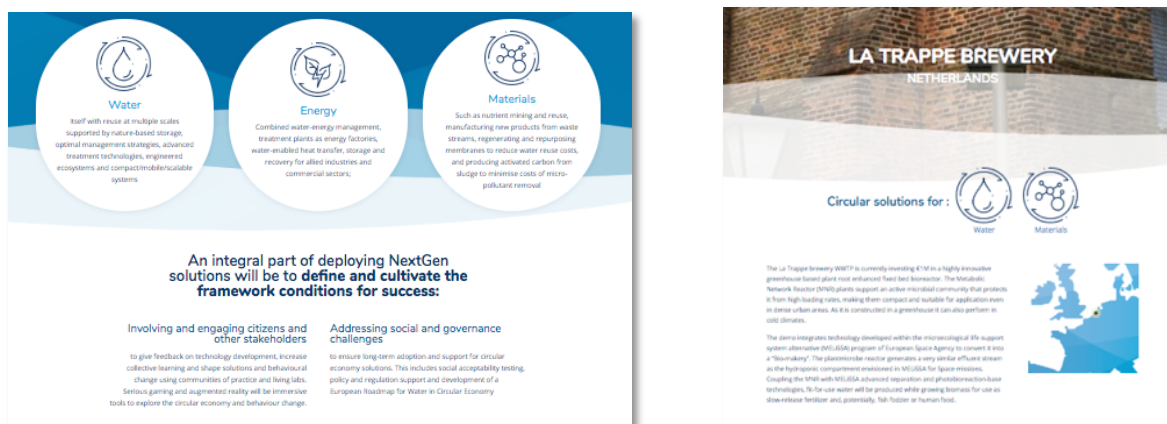


Figure 17: Consistent key messages and demonstration site presentation

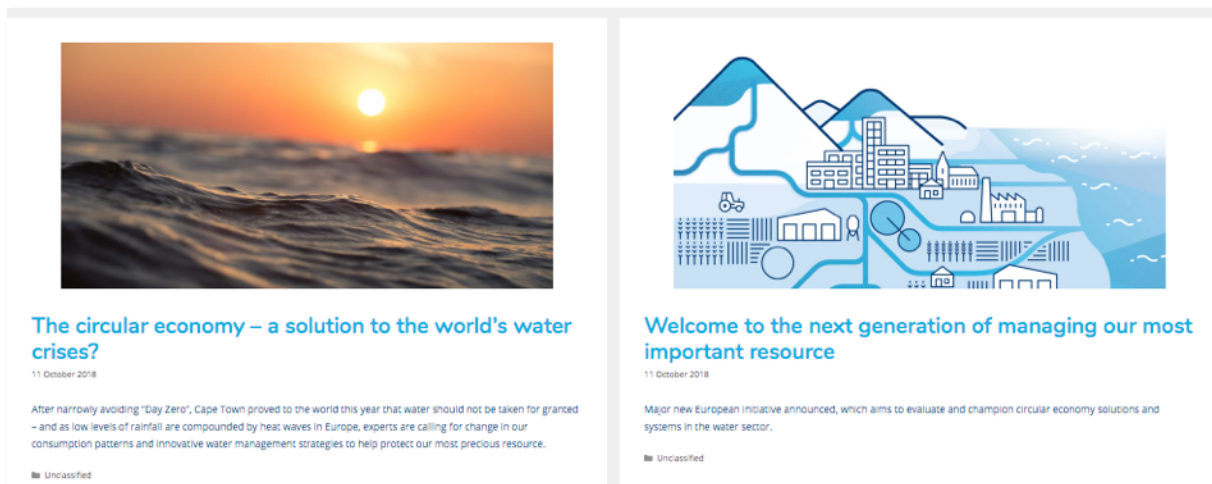


Figure 18: Online articles and interviews

Social networks and digital media

Social media will be used to inform and stay connected with **target audiences: professionals, policy makers and scientific community as well as reach out to an interested general public.**

In the professional domain, **LinkedIn** will be used to host a 'company page' to feed with project news and developments and targets invited to follow. The platform's 106 million unique monthly visitors will also generate healthy organic search and reference for NextGen content, with an additional possibility to use the sites 'pulse' article publishing features. ESCI especially encourages individuals from the consortium to post updates and articles about their work and challenges in NextGen from a personal point of view. Such peer-to-peer insights delivered to personal professional contacts can be very effective in creating awareness and impact.

The general health and activity of LinkedIn groups are declining, since acquisition by Microsoft in late 2016. However, the project still aims to identify high-value specialist groups relevant to the project and post in these forums.

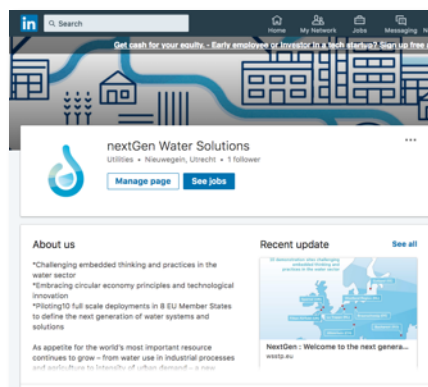


Figure 19: NextGen LinkedIn Company Page

NextGen will use twitter as its primary social media channel. It is a productive platform to listen, observe, showcase, promote and interact with professionals, EU and national policy makers, academia and the scientific community. A lively twitter feed will aim to:

- Identify stakeholders and influencers, build lists to help strategic and geographic segmentation
- Distribute NextGen original content
- Aim to attract and maintain the interest of key influencers and thought leaders
- Enhance and amplify presence before, during and after events

Interest in the circular economy and the vital nature of water should help create reach and impact for @NextGenWaterEU. Indeed, the account already achieved 100 followers even before the official start of the project. Hash tags used will align around #circulareconomy, event specific tags and policy/professional tags promoted by WssTP and others such as #ValueofWater.



Figure 20: NextGen twitter feed and post

Further to these, YouTube will be used hosting the short animation video and video news release and suitable NextGen editorial content will be pushed to a number of video channels in science, technology, ecology, environment and circular economy. With a constantly evolving social media landscape, NextGen will remain open to using any appropriate social media network or tool to meet the right target audience. Particular attention will be paid to social broadcasting tools with an accent on video, like Periscope or Facebook Live.

Assessing impact

NextGen will use a wide range of channels to be visible, credible and ultimately inspire professional and public audiences to take action. NextGen distributes and engages on

numerous platforms. Tracking data where possible is important to evaluate actions and impact; but capturing the overall footprint and impact of NextGen across multiple countries is a difficult task. Where media is NextGen ‘shared’ and ‘owned’ – such as articles, blogs, twitter, LinkedIn and website – data and analytics are much easier to track and analyse. However, knowing when a journalist, video news channel or even scientific publisher has cited NextGen (‘earned’ media) is more difficult to achieve.

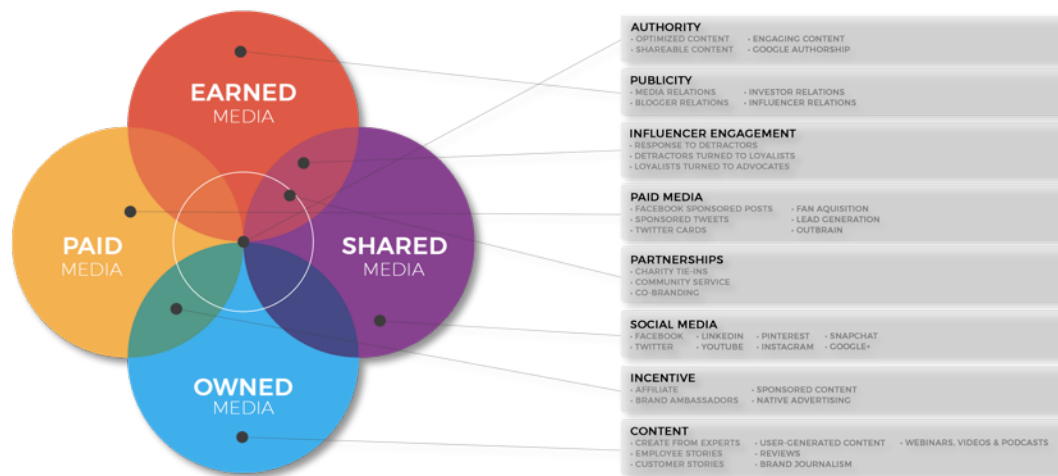


Figure 21: NextGen owned, shared, earned media examples

NextGen will use a variety of sources to try and achieve the best possible assessment and understanding about how and when audiences receive and interact with our messages and content. Web and social media monitoring are how we aim to achieve this.

Web monitoring

Web monitoring refers to the process of testing and verifying interaction of end-users with websites, web applications and social media accounts. It is a critical process since it provides information regarding uptime and downtime and overall performance and response. For the NextGen website, it will be monitored not only regarding common metrics but also in order to register the total number of sessions during different project periods. It is also interesting to investigate the top locations to gain perspective of the project’s global impact. Overall, the most interesting quantities to be monitored are:

- Total number of visits
- Average session and visit duration
- Number of frequent & one-time visitors
- Visiting prime time
- Visitors’ location

Internally, ESCI will monitor these on a monthly basis and share in detail with the consortium at project meetings. Additional monitoring frequency can be done around specific events, campaign actions or local demonstration site initiatives.

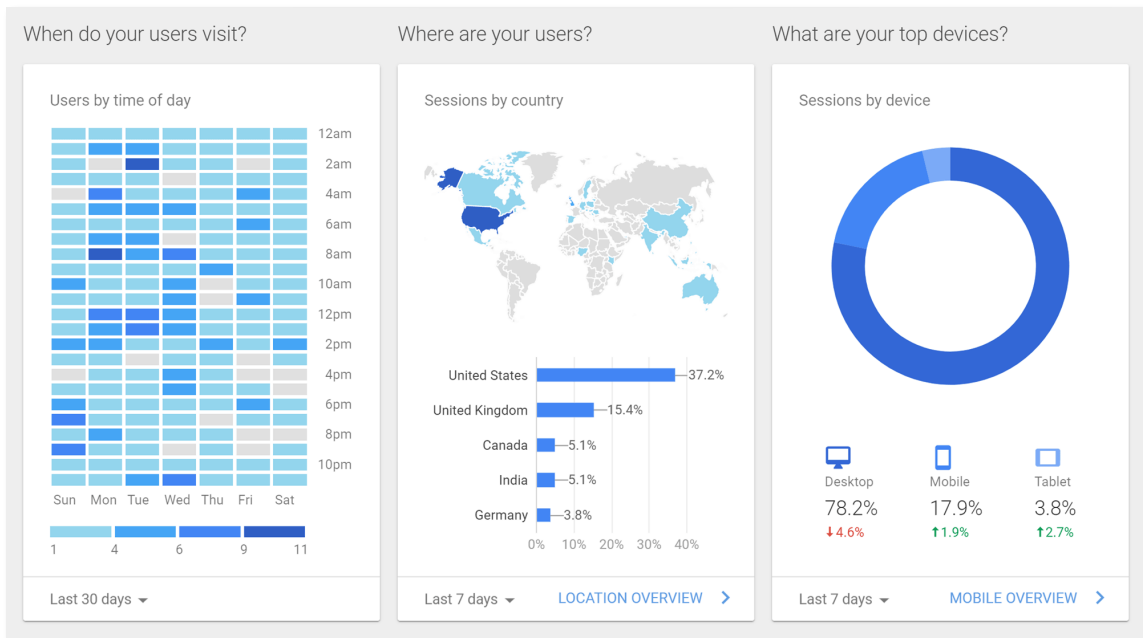
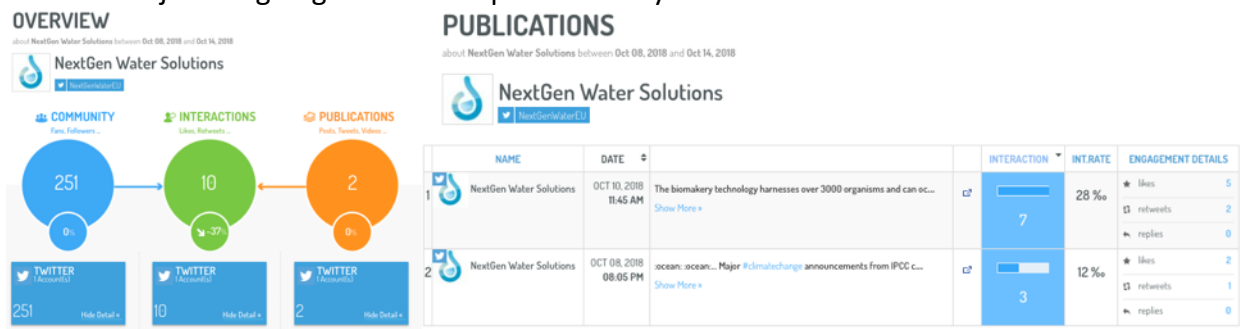


Figure 22: Google analytics Word Press plugin sample

Social media monitoring

In a similar way, the social media will be monitored as a way to determine the volume and sentiment of online interaction. Many kinds of data are accumulated during the acquisition process, from simple information as statistics on likes, followers, re-tweets etc. to more complex such as comments, downloads etc. LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter accounts will be monitored for that purpose in order to identify their overall impact on different target groups. Social media monitoring is often referred to as SMMS (Social Media Management Software), which is an application that facilitates successful engagement in social media across different communication channels. It monitors inbound and outbound conversations and evaluates the usefulness of a social media presence.

For the purpose of NextGen, ESCI will use a combination of analytic tools embedded in each platform and a central client called Digimind. These analytics will enable ESCI to assess, fine tune and adjust on going actions and provide analysis for deliverables 6.2 and 6.3.



Digimind

Update engagement ⓘ Viewing 1 - 10 of 10 Show: 10 ▼

Update name	Date	Impressions	Clicks	Video views	CTR	Social Actions	Engagement
Koningshoeven NextGen All followers	10/11/2018	93	-	0	-	5	5.38%
Registration for NEWFERT & PHORWÄRTS JOINT EVENT ... All followers	10/9/2018	90	2	0	2.22%	1	3.33%
Water experts from Catalonia, Berlin & beyond... All followers	10/3/2018	267	21	0	7.87%	11	11.99%
Background media All followers	9/18/2018	94	6	0	6.38%	3	9.57%
Our mission: to challenge embedded thinking &... All followers	9/13/2018	740	711	0	96.08%	12	97.7%

LinkedIn

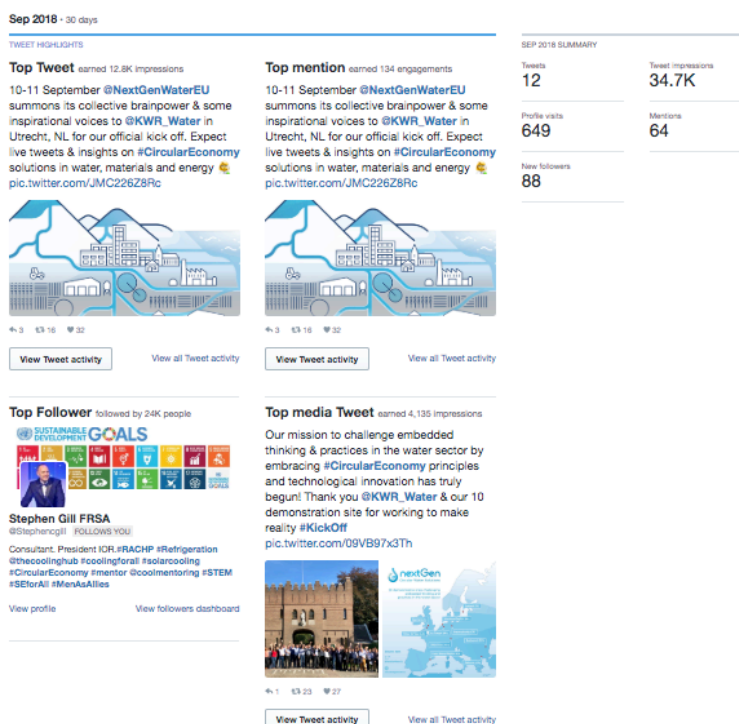


Figure 23: Digimind, LinkedIn and twitter analytics insights

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – ESCI lead

Highlights: Regular impact assessment, higher levels of engagement, improved visibility and take up of NextGen solutions

Key Outputs: Detailed analysis in NextGen annual reporting, project meetings

Offline and print materials

A selection of printed communication and dissemination materials will be developed to support face to face meetings, at events, workshops and conferences and extend exposure to NextGen actions through poster sessions and other static displays.

The project intends to develop two postcard flyers featuring key messages, an info graphic and a clear call to action for targeted audiences. The first will be developed in M4 to help attract audiences and build on the first social media actions. The second will build on the tangible results and experiences from project demonstration sites in year 3 or 4.

To respond to the many opportunities for static display or visual support, A1 and roll up posters giving the key facts and outputs of the project, with a call to action for further engagement will be designed and made available for all consortium members to produce and use themselves.



Figure 24: NextGen demonstration site map

Delivery & Management: M1-M48 – ESCI lead

Highlights: Eye catching visual supports for face-to-face events in public-facing, academic, institutional and commercial fields. Clear calls to action to build social media following.

Key Outputs: A mix of cost-effective and easy to distribute print materials at appropriate moments of NextGen project: postcard flyer, A1, rollup and brochures

External events and academic outreach

During the project, all partners and demonstration sites are expected to capitalise on available outreach opportunities at events for professional, academic and public audiences. Local, national and international events are critical to:

- Build awareness and trust in NextGen actions and solutions to accelerate replication of circular economy solutions among professional audiences and supportive citizens alike
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and transfer in academia, research and policy spheres
- Inspire a broader public to move towards a long-term sustainable behaviour change and assist adoption of new technologies and services

NextGen will be represented in a series of national and International workshops and conferences. Partners attending these events are expected to engage with specialist groups of stakeholders and be confident ambassadors of the project. By connecting with these audiences, NextGen can disseminate information about the solutions demonstrated and developed at the relevant level of detail, providing particular reference to specialist areas. Representatives will actively participate in relevant events to provide an opportunity to exchange experience and ideas about all aspects of the project and will allow for detailed and personalised contact with specialists. In addition, it is a perfect dissemination platform for the project results.

At each demonstration site, at least one event tailored to their identified key stakeholder groups will be delivered. These may be a focal action for their Communities of Practice and will be additionally supported with a range of project content, promotion and news channels.

At a EU and policy level, Task 6.3 outlines the European Innovation Platforms on Water and the Circular Economy will be very well supported by NextGen input and attendance. A variety of print materials, posters, video and social media support from work package leader will be provided to these highlight WssTP events for NextGen project objectives.

A final event at the end of the project will present substantiated NextGen results and launch the future spin offs and commercial life of the knowledge and networks generated. This major event will be held in conjunction with the will be 'Water Innovation Europe' conference & exhibition and open to an audience including stakeholders, public authorities, utilities, other potential end-users and European institutions. It will benefit from around 300-350 attendees.

Open access policy

In the academic sphere, the project will monitor and participate in academic conferences and publications at every suitable opportunity and fully support EC Open Access Strategy obligations and use of the OpenAIRE platform to better build research on previously published research results, achieve greater efficiency by fostering collaboration and avoiding duplication and accelerating innovation.

According to [H2020 rules on the Open Access Policy](#), Open Access (OA) refers to the practice of providing online access to scientific information that is free of charge to the end-user and reusable. In particular, regarding research data, open access refers to the right to access and

reuse digital research data under the terms and conditions set out in the project's Grant Agreement.

To further elaborate on the term, open access to scientific publication and research data in the wider context of dissemination and exploitation can be illustrated by the following figure: Routes to Open Access. The term “Green OA” in the figure refers to the case when beneficiaries can deposit the final peer-reviewed manuscript in a repository of their choice. Similarly, “Gold OA” refers to open access publishing, meaning that researchers can also publish in open access journals or hybrid journals (journals which both sell subscription and offer the option of making individual articles openly accessible). It is important to mention that the term research data is used to describe information, which can have the form of facts or numbers, that are considered as a basis for reasoning, discussion or further calculation and elaboration.

In the “*Model Grant Agreement*” official document it is stated that each beneficiary should disseminate its results (including scientific publications) by appropriate means, unless this would be against its legitimate interests. In the same document, there are concrete guidelines regarding the Open Access Policy divided into two steps. In particular, as a first step it is stated that each beneficiary must ensure free of charge online access for any user to all peer-reviewed scientific publications related to its results. Regarding the second step, the beneficiary should render the results accessible as soon as possible in a repository of scientific publications and ensure open access to the data. Furthermore, beneficiaries should provide as many options as possible related to the right to copy, distribute, search, link and mine the public documents.

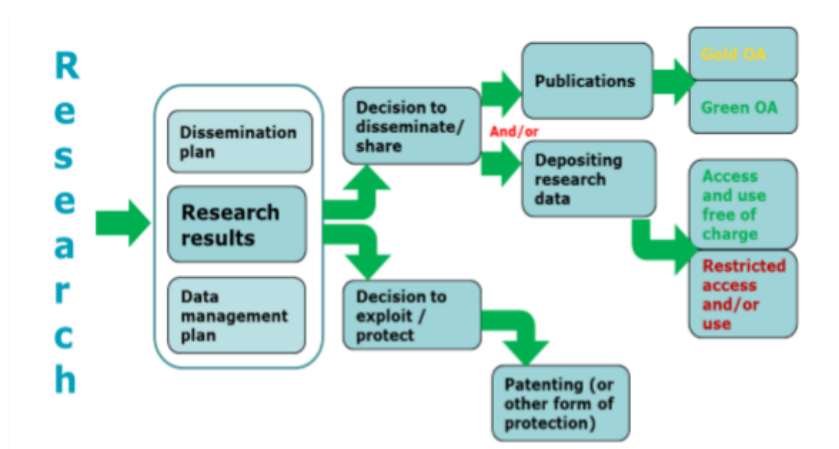


Figure 25: Routes to Open Access

Publications and events reporting

A regular reporting of past events and actions, plus upcoming highlights for the project and within each ecosystem will be conducted twice a year. Regular meetings of key WP6 contacts will serve to update this and discuss actions to amplify and support a publication or event.

ESCI and CTM will request a formal input from partners about their communications and disseminations activities every six months and make available to all in the collective online workspace. More important events will also be a source of interviews, articles, news releases, social media activity and more. A regular conference call dedicated to following WP6 actions and responsibilities will be held every three months.

An overall impression of impact generated at events will be detailed in deliverable 6.5 'Report on impact of external events and academic papers' authored by CTM.

Conclusion

NextGen communication and dissemination actions set off at a good pace, with a lively PR campaign, decent sector press coverage and a popular professional social media profile. Indeed, with 100 twitter followers before the project even began and 250 today, a proactive approach seems to be rewarded.

Interest from sector media and BBC science and environment team reflect the vital nature of the subject area and growing understanding of our need to replace the linear use of precious resources. This should continue to make for fertile ground, even in the development stages of the project. With 10 demonstration sites, NextGen should hopefully overcome traditional EU project hurdles and be able to deliver tangible examples in action even before the final months.

Tools and content to help the entire consortium be NextGen ambassadors are available and being added to with social media maps, branding tools and templates available to all. These have grown quickly with a collaboration to produce 10 high quality posters for the main kick off meeting and a postcard flyer end of M4 planned. Key messages and editorial content has also been shared to help coordinate and communicate effectively. This includes launch press releases and interviews with key actors from the project coordinator and advisory board.

Online, a branded, dynamic website is in the final stages. It is a coordinated landing point for the project, with visual identity, messages, facts and figures the same in written and offline channels.

The September 2018 project meeting was also a great opportunity for ESCI video teams to report and interview. The footage will be used for a series of video profiles and the first video news release.

For all the positive developments, some structure and clear processes still need to be nailed down. With the complete kick off meeting only in month three, essential steps of getting to know each other, identify the best contacts, and discuss interactions with other work packages has been slightly delayed. An initial framework for trimester conference calls, six month formal reporting of events and actions was agreed. Some more detailed discussions with work packages 3 (engagement) and 5 (business creation) must also take place.

This document may be updated to reflect and report on these arrangements in M12.

Included in annex is a table of performance metrics to measure and guide the WP6 team.



Annex 1: Selected WP6 metrics

	Selected Communication and Dissemination Actions & Metrics			
CC&D Objective	M1-M12	M13-M24	M25-M36	M37-M48
CC&D Plan	Define strategic frame for success	Analyse and update (M20)	Monitor & refine	Monitor & refine
Compelling written content for 'multiplier' distribution to specialist & mass media	10 x news releases 3-4 interviews 2 x independent articles An. est. reader reach: >40,000	10 x news releases 3-4 interviews 2 x independent articles An. est. reader reach: >30,000	10 x news releases 3-4 interviews 2 x independent articles An. est. reader reach: >30,000	10 x news releases 3-4 interviews 2 x independent articles An. est. reader reach: >40,000
Innovative video content targeting TV mass media and social media uptake	1 x Video News Release Broadcast: 80,000 viewers Social media reach	Continued social media reach & (re)promotion	Continued social media reach & (re)promotion	1 x Video News Release Broadcast: 80,000 viewers Social media reach
Info graphics	2 x info graphics	2 x info graphics	2 x info graphics	2 x info graphics
NETXGEN case studies Proprietary & published insights and best practices	Developing format, concepts and opportunities to profile and contribute to EIP, OECD, SIRA etc.	2 x NEXTGEN case studies 2 x externally published profiles	3 x NEXTGEN case studies 2 x externally published profiles	3 x NEXTGEN case studies 2 x externally published profiles
NEXTGEN print materials Distribution at prof, academic, EU, Int. & local events	Flyer/brochure: 500 recipients 1 x A1 poster	Flyer/brochure: 500 recipients 1 x A1 poster	Flyer/brochure: 500 recipients 1 x A1 poster	Flyer/brochure: 1.000 recipients 1 x A1 poster
Social media strategy Digital distribution targeting consolidated platforms	twitter: 150 followers/40 RT YouTube: 1000 views LinkedIn: 80 follower/20 posts SlideShare: 300 views 1 x social broadcast session	twitter: 300 followers/ 30RT YouTube: 2000 views LinkedIn: 160 followers/60 posts SlideShare: 450 views 1 x social broadcast session	twitter: 400 followers/40 RT YouTube: 2500 views LinkedIn: 220 followers/80 posts SlideShare: 550 views 1 x social broadcast session	twitter: 500 followers/60 RT YouTube: 3000 views LinkedIn: 280 followers/100 posts SlideShare: 650 views 1 x social broadcast session
Project Website Digital 'anchor' for project	Web-stats: 300 visits/ month Av. Session: > 2 minutes	Web-stats: 400 visits/ month Av. Session: > 2 minutes	Web-stats: 400 visits/ month Av. Session: > 2 minutes	Web-stats: 400 visits/ month Av. Session: > 2 minutes
Visual identity	Uniform deployment Info graphic creativity	Uniform deployment Info graphic creativity	Uniform deployment Info graphic creativity	Uniform deployment Info graphic creativity
National & International events / year Local stakeholders, citizens, EU, scientific & business TBC	COP meetings: EU policy meetings: Demonstrator outreach actions: Living Lab & end users reached: International collaborations: Academic & Industry conferences:	COP meetings: EU policy meetings: Demonstrator outreach actions: Living Lab & end users reached: International collaborations: Academic & Industry conferences:	COP meetings: EU policy meetings: Demonstrator outreach actions: Living Lab & end users reached: International collaborations: Academic & Industry conferences:	COP meetings: EU policy meetings: Demonstrator outreach actions: Living Lab & end users reached: International collaborations: Academic & Industry conferences:



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