

HYDR 4U

Sustainable Small-Scale
Hydropower in Central Asia

Deliverable 7.3: Internal Project Communication Strategy WP7, Task 7.1

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CO	Coordinator
DoA	Description of Action
DX.Y	Deliverable number Y of the Xth Work-Package
DB	Demonstration Board
EC	European Commission
EEAB	External Expert Advisory Board
EU	European Union
GA	General Assembly
H2020	Horizon 2020 (8 th Framework Programme for Research of the EU)
SC	Steering Committee
WP	Work Package

0. Publishable Summary

The deliverable D7.3 “Internal Project Communication Strategy” is being submitted as specified in the Hydro4U Description of Action (DoA). The dissemination level of this deliverable is public. The aim of this deliverable is to describe the internal communication strategy implemented within the Hydro4U project with all communication methods and data sharing possibilities selected by the project coordinator.

1. Introduction & Relation to Project Progress

1.1. Purpose of Deliverable

The internal communication strategy was developed to ensure an efficient exchange of information among all partners. This deliverable describes the organizational structure of the project together with the roles and responsibilities, gives the communication objectives and demonstrates which internal communication methods and channels are used among all partners and groups.

1.2. Objectives of WP & Expected Impact

The definition and implementation of an internal project communication strategy is part of WP7 – Management of the project and the task 7.1 Project coordination and management. The objectives of WP7 include the development of an overall management and internal communication strategy explicitly. The communication strategy described within this deliverable implements a fast, precise and effective communication between the partners and therefore ensures a facilitated project management as well as an efficient project progress. In this way, the project process can be monitored and arising issues can be detected early and can be addressed. The objectives linked to the internal communication strategy can be taken from section 3.

1.3. Relation to Other Activities in the Project

As part of the Project Management (WP7) the communication strategy provides an exchange of information between Management, WP Leaders and Partners as well as between partners directly and thus affects all activities and all partners in Hydro4U. This deliverable is closely related to a number of other deliverables shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Relation to other activities in the project

Deliverable Number	Relations & Contributions
D7.1	Project Management Plan
D7.2	Data Management Plan
D7.4	Planning and organization of the different board meetings

2. Hydro4U Organizational Structure

In order to achieve an efficient communication within the project, the internal project communication strategy is adapted to the organizational structure of the Hydro4U project. Thus, the organizational structure with consortium bodies as well as their roles and responsibilities are described here.

2.1. Consortium Bodies

The organizational structure of the Consortium shall comprise the following **Consortium Bodies** (Figure 1):

- The **Coordinator (CO)** is the legal entity acting as the intermediary between the Parties and the Funding Authority. The Coordinator shall, in addition to its responsibilities as a Party, perform the tasks assigned to it as described in the Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement.

- **General Assembly (GA)** as the ultimate decision-making body of the consortium. One representative of each partner organisation is part of the GA.
- **Steering Committee (SC)** as the supervisory body for the execution of the Project, which shall report to and be accountable to the General Assembly. WP Leaders are represented in the SC.
- The **Demonstration Board (DB)**, which is responsible for the technical realization of the demonstration sites. All relevant partner organisations are represented in the DB.
- The **D&C Secretariat** is meeting regularly with at least the country representatives and WP Leaders to plan future actions.
- The **External Expert Advisory Board (EEAB)** supports the Management Boards and consists out of external scientific and industrial experts.

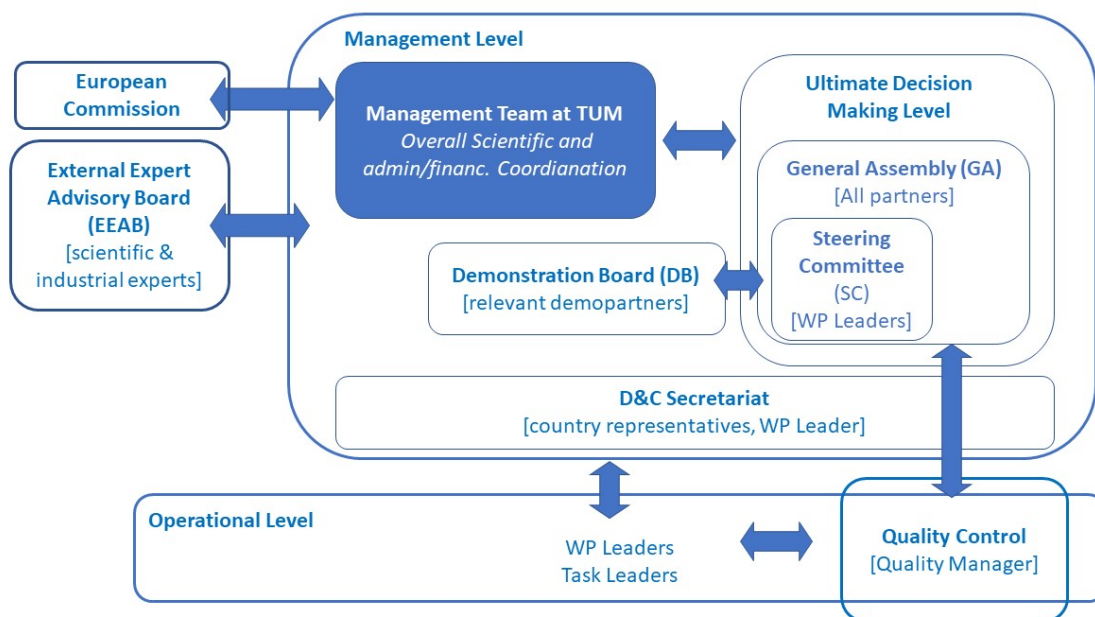


Figure 1: Hydro4U Organizational Structure overview

2.2. Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure an effective management of the Hydro4U project, three levels will be defined:

1. A **management level** consisting of overall management, coordination, monitoring and advisory activities.
2. An **operational level** with WP and task leaders.
3. The **ultimate decision-making level** of the project – performed by the steering committee (SC) and General Assembly (GA).

The responsibilities and tasks of each level are described below (for a detailed description see D7.1).

First, (a) **the management level** will be performed by TUM, a German university and research organisation that is very experienced in coordinating large, international research projects consisting of:

1. **Scientific coordinator** of the project will lead and coordinate the Hydro4U project
2. **Demonstration Manager** of the project will coordinate and monitors the implementation of the activities at the demonstration and planning sites

3. **Project Manager** The Project Office shall be appointed by the Coordinator and shall assist and facilitate the work of the Coordinator for the financial management as well as the day-to-day management of the Project. The management of project includes responsibility for administrative and financial management.

Together, they will be the **central contact point for the Commission/Agency** and represents the consortium (towards the Commission/Agency). They will coordinate and **manage the grant** and will be responsible for the overall monitoring and implementation of all technical tasks and financial control and perform the project coordination tasks as described in D7.1.

Second, (b) **operational level** includes:

Steering Committee SC (WP leaders): On the operational level, all WP will be led by one consortium partner, the leader of the WP, who brings the most expertise in the field of the respective activities. These **WP leaders** will assume responsibility for the overall WP and the implementation of all tasks contributing to it. WP leaders will provide assistance regarding WP and task-specific issues to all partners involved in their WP. Together with the Project Management Team the task leaders are responsible for the timing, organization, planning and monitoring of costs and quality of deliverables of each task. They also support the coordinator with the collection of reports on the activities performed and results achieved. The responsibilities of the WP leaders include the following activities:

- a. Monitor progress against the WP plan and budget
- b. Review the technical output of the WP on an ongoing basis
- c. Mitigate technical risk identified in the risk register and do risk reporting to the steering committee
- d. Report progress and the achievement of milestones to the project coordinator
- e. Produce the WP mid-term and final reports
- f. Attend management committee meetings and provide WP progress updates

If any problem arises with the implementation of a task in the WP, the WP leader will attempt to resolve the issue in collaboration with the respective task leader. If no solution can be found, the WP Leader will consult the Management Team which will take a decision regarding the further handling of the task.

The **Steering Committee** oversees monitoring the progress in their respective WPs and reporting to the Management Team. The Management Team will ensure a constant information flow with the WP leaders in order to ensure proper operations of the project.

The SC, chaired by the CO, is the principal executing and operating body for the consortium concerning scientific and technical demands of the work plan and monitors the effective and efficient implementation of the project. Therefore, meetings are planned every 6 months where discussions on overall project issues (i.e. finance, IPR including use of background, deviation of the work plan including budget, remedies to be performed by a defaulting party) come to a decision. In addition to the SC members' roles as WP leaders, the SC has the following responsibilities:

- a. Preparing and implementing General Assembly decisions
- b. Ensuring the comparability and integration of the results of the different work packages and the maximisation of synergies,
- c. Enhancing communication amongst all partners
- d. Promoting dissemination and exploitation of breakthrough project results.

The **Demonstration Board (DB)**, which is responsible for the technical realization of the demonstration sites, reports to the scientific project coordinator located at TUM, which is also a member of the SC.

Task leaders: Task leaders assume a role like WP leaders, except that the role will be task specific. Task leaders report to their respective WP leader and aid regarding task and subtask specific issues to all partners involved in their task.

If any problem arises with the implementation of a task or subtask in the WP, the task leader will consult the WP leader. In collaboration with the WP leader, a decision regarding the further handling of the task or subtask will be made. If no solution can be found, the Management Team will be involved.

Third, (c) the **ultimate decision-making level** relates to:

General Assembly (GA): Each individual partner organisation will nominate a senior and experienced representative entitled with decision making rights of the respective organisation. The representative will be the communication party for partner's administrative matters. The responsibility of each individual partner and the partner representative include: a) Monitor and manage the partner in-house scope, b) Monitor and manage work sub-contracted by a partner, c) Communicate technical data and results to the project data platform, d) Communicate progress and achievement of milestones and deliverables to the WP leader e) Implement risk mitigation activities arising from the risk register, f) Attend SC meetings, g) Produce technical reports detailing completed scope of work and h) Produce the audit certificates required by the EC.

The joint key responsibilities of the Steering Committee are:

- Producing and updating the CA (where relevant)
- Joint decision making for matters escalated by the WP leaders or the Project Management Team
- Final overall progress monitoring against budget and plan
- Decide on any significant risks brought up by the WP leaders or the Project Management and on the implementation of mitigation measures where necessary

Meetings of the Steering Committee and the General Assembly will be chaired by the project coordinator. Meeting procedures, preparation and follow-up are determined in detail in the CA. The decision-making structure follows a clear and democratic approach with a bottom-up decision-making mechanism: The individual partners are all represented in the Steering Committee, which constitutes the decision-making body of the project and jointly decide on above matters.

External Expert Advisory Board: Hydro4U will actively involve an advisory board consisting of representatives of the various target groups. The board will be consulted throughout the phases of the project: 1) within the research and innovation phase we need to ensure a wide as possible perspective of the technological and methodological approach. 2) Within the analysis and demonstration phase as well as in the exploitation and transfer phase, the board will represent the groups relevant for reaching maximum impact.

We will invite selected experts to key meetings (e.g. kick-off, year 1, 3 and final meeting) and have ad-hoc meetings or communications between the management team, WP leaders and the advisory board for feedback and guidance collection.

3. Internal Communication Objectives

The internal communication strategy was developed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To ensure that all the project members are aware of the project ongoing activities, and which outcomes it will deliver.
2. To develop a desire amongst all members involved in the project to contribute towards the successful implementation of the project and the delivery of the benefits.
3. To manage expectations among project members. The coordinator and the project office aim to build a reputation as a trusted quality and innovative information source.
4. To provide timely and accurate information to all project members about the steps to be taken. This will support the project implementation, thereby meeting the project objectives. Key message: For each project member – what to do, when to do it, and how much time it should take.

Thus, the internal communication strategy includes the establishment of a contact database and defines which communication methods and channels are used to what purpose. The communication strategy with all selected communication methods is described in section 4.

4. Internal Communication Methods

In order to enhance the communication process and make sure it is as efficient as possible, as well as to achieve the communication objectives (see section 3), several different communication methods and channels as well as data sharing possibilities were selected and implemented by the project coordinator. The different communication channels and methods are named and it is described when and to what purpose they are used.

4.1. Contact Information Database

The Coordinator has established a **contact information database** which contains contact information of all Hydro4U members collected from all project members. The contact information was collected using an online contact form which can be found [here](#) and in Annex 7.1. This database contains the following information:

- Institution
- Title
- First name
- Last name
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Mobile number
- Organisation
- Position in organisation
- Department
- Address (department)
- City/Town
- Post code
- Country
- Website (department)

In addition to the contact information, different roles were assigned to each project member by the partner organization lead representative to enable an efficient communication. The board roles are:

- WP Leader
- WP Leader delegate

- WP Co-leader
- DB Leader
- DB Member
- Advisory Board Member

While the project roles are:

- Responsible for Contact database update
- Partner team leader
- "Emergency contact": Availability for immediate response
- Responsible to deal with Financial issues
- Responsible to deal with project management /administrative issues
- Responsible to deal with contract issues
- Responsible for dissemination & communication issues
- Responsible for exploitation issues
- Team member

The database is currently completed but can be updated if necessary (e.g. changes in staff).

4.2. Email Communication

Email communication is used daily, however, it would be limited to individual communication to inform specific project members about certain issues. Mass emails would be generally avoided to avoid loss of information or email overloads. General information to all members from the coordinator/project office would be communicated through the internal newsletter (see section 4.8).

For ease of communication within the partners, the coordinator has established mailing lists for the different boards. Hydro4U makes use of the service "Mailman" hosted by the Leibniz Rechenzentrum (LRZ), which is free to use for Munich Universities such as TUM. Administrator of the mailing list is only the coordinator to ensure data protection.

The mailing lists*:

- Lead representative of all partners organizations: xxxx@lists.lrz.de.
- Work package leaders, Steering committee members: xxxx@lists.lrz.de.
- Demonstration Board (DB) members: xxxx@lists.lrz.de.
- External Experts Advisory Board (EEAB) members: xxxx@lists.lrz.de

* The email addresses were not shown here, as the dissemination level of the deliverable is public.

All Hydro4U related emails include in the subject header the word "Hydro4U" in the beginning so the email can be easily recognized.

4.3. Video conference calls and telephone communication

Due to the international, transcontinental character of the consortium, Hydro4U makes use of video conferencing systems frequently. Not only in times of the COVID-19-pandemic but also to reduce travelling costs, web meetings are a suitable option to exchange and meet regularly. TUM provides the system "ZOOM", which will be mainly used for Hydro4Us meetings. In specific cases other software might be used as well such as MS Teams.

The use of telephone communication would be generally very limited. Formal telephone conversations (conference calls for project discussions) shall be documented by the use of minutes where all the important highlights, actions and decisions are listed.

4.4. Data Sharing

For the purpose of data sharing among Hydro4U partners, the Hydro4U coordinator has chosen the Sync+Share platform. Sync+Share is a secure, easy to use platform that resembles the famous commercial platform Dropbox but it is operated by Leibniz Supercomputing Centre (conforming with the German data protection law and the European Union Data Protection Directive (Directive 95/46/EC on 24 October 1995). It provides services for storing project documents and document versioning among team members. Different accessibility rights are given to different Hydro4U boards and partners. Here all meeting minutes, calendars, scheduling are stored. Additional data sharing methods are described within the Data Management Plan (D7.2).

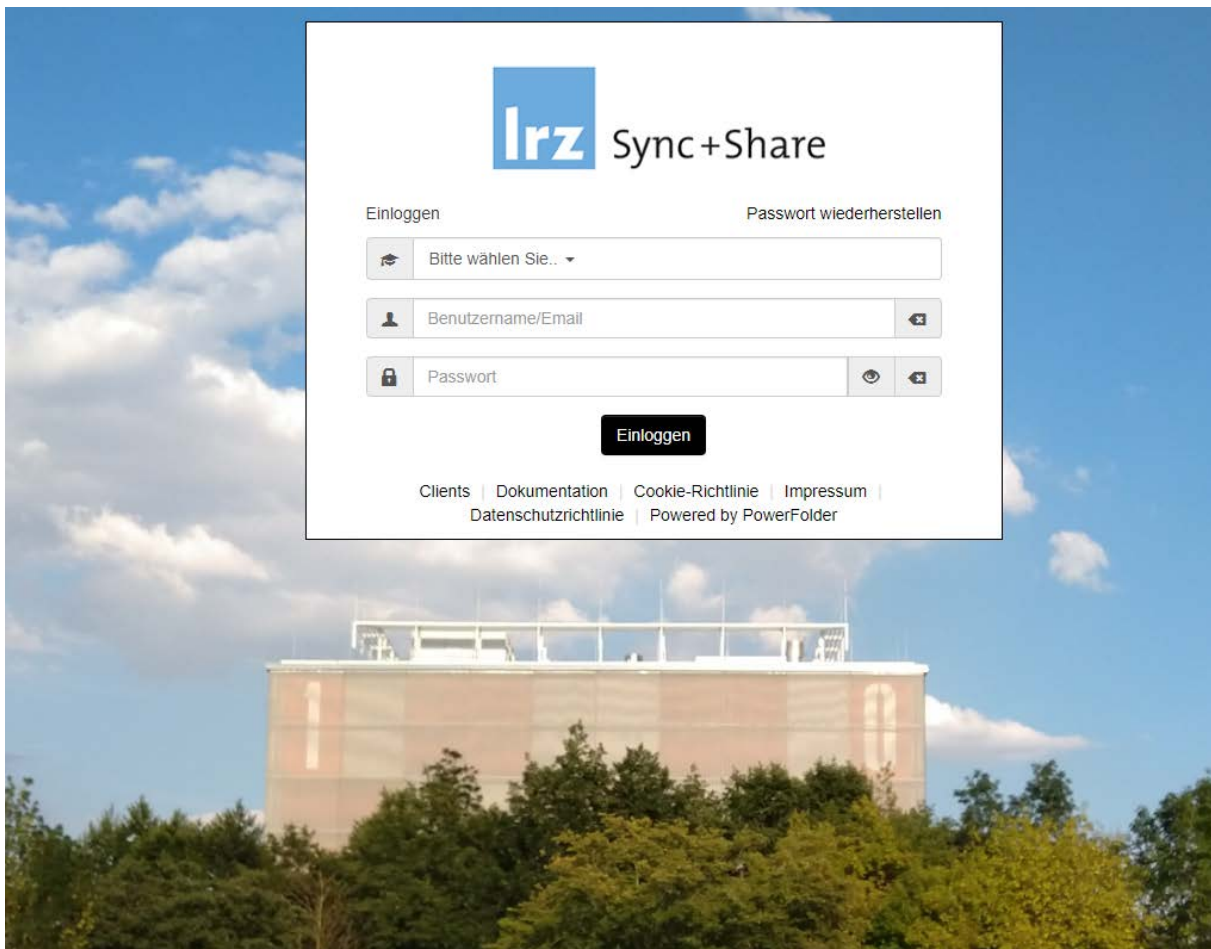


Figure 2: Login to LRZ sync+share platform

4.5. Meetings

4.5.1. Standard Project meetings

The project has three types of standard meetings for the different project boards:

- General Assembly (GA) meetings.
- Steering Committee (SC) meetings.
- Demonstration Board (DB) meetings.

For these standard meetings the following meeting frequency has been defined (Table 2):

Table 2: Meeting Frequency Rules

	Ordinary meeting	Extraordinary meeting
General Assembly	At least once a year	At any time upon written request of the Steering Committee or 1/3 of the Members of the General Assembly
Steering Committee	At least every six months	At any time upon written request of any Member of the Steering Committee
Demonstration Board*	At least every two months	At any time upon written request of any Member of the Demonstration Board

In addition, specific rules regarding meeting documentation (Minutes), agenda and meeting notice to partners are defined in detail in the consortium agreement and are described in D7.4 together with a detailed Hydro4U meeting schedule. The majority of the meetings will be held virtually depending on the development of the Covid-19-pandemic. The highlights of these meetings will be documented in specific meeting minutes.

4.5.2. Work package leaders meeting

The coordinator has set in place a periodic meeting scheme for all work package leaders to discuss the updates, synergies and dependencies between different work packages among other issues related to work packages. This should minimize the risk of having specific partners working in isolation from other partners. Each month, two slots are defined in which one time slot is used for the WP leaders meeting and the other would be used as a back-up slot for other required meetings based on the project's needs. The WPL meetings are made using conference call solutions. For each WPL meeting short meeting minutes are generated, where necessary and urgent Actions and important information highlighted. These minutes are available on S&S for all WPLs.

Meeting Dates for WP leaders meeting in 2021 2nd half							
	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Day	Mittwoch, 7. Juli 2021	Mittwoch, 11. August 2021	Donnerstag, 9. September 2021	Mittwoch, 13. Oktober 2021	Mittwoch, 10. November 2021	Donnerstag, 9. Dezember 2021	
Meeting 1 Time	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30
Day	Mittwoch, 21. Juli 2021		Mittwoch, 22. September 2021	Mittwoch, 27. Oktober 2021	Mittwoch, 24. November 2021	Mittwoch, 15. Dezember 2021	
Meeting 2 Time	13:00 - 14:30		13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30	13:00 - 14:30

Figure 3: Scheduling of WPL meetings

4.6. Internal Calendar

The coordinator established an internal Hydro4U calendar which contains all project events as well as communication activities (see Annex 7.2). The calendar is accessible to all Hydro4U members via Sync&Share and is updated monthly by the project coordinator.

4.7. Website

The website (www.hydro4u.eu) fulfils two levels of communication and dissemination: an internal and an external. It will be used as a platform to inform about the status, upcoming events and deadlines:

- Internal transfer of information
- Communication and discussion among project partners.

The website will be launched in November 2021. The homepage will be updated regularly with the newest information related to the project. The website contains a “news” section where all new developments within the project would be documented as news pieces. They are then visible to all project members and external website visitors.

4.8. Communication with EEAB

The External Expert Advisory Board (EEAB) is an important part of the project. Their feedback on the project structure, implementation and progress are important for the success of Hydro4U. In order to enhance the communication with the EEAB, the coordinator has set up a periodic feedback process where the EEAB send a **recommendation report** to the coordinator after each meeting they attend, documenting all their comments and recommendations on the project activities. The coordinator's responsibility is to study the report/presentation and set up actions when appropriate to address the issues that were highlighted in the EEAB report. All these actions would be documented in an **Action Report**. These reports are disseminated and shared with all other partners. Specific points and remarks that are included in the EEAB report and that are not addressed in the action report will be forwarded to the specific people whose work is directly related to these remarks. As a general rule, EEAB members would be included in the communication between WP members only when there is a need for guidance and advice. In these instances, the WP leader should explicitly mention/ask the EEAB members on what kind of guidance is needed. The coordinator would share the SC meeting highlights with the EEAB members to regularly inform them about the project development.

4.9. Communication with the European Commission (EC)

As defined in the Grant Agreement, the Management Team will be responsible for communication to EC on all contractual issues. It will also act as a mediator for questions from partners concerning the EC (helpline for any question) and vice versa. The communication with EC will be done by phone or e-mail. The coordinator will be responsible for the preparation and delivery of the periodic reports and any other additional reporting requested by the Commission Services. The EC will receive technical and financial reports (in English) on a regular basis every 18 months of the project. Review meetings will take place according to specifications in the Grant Agreement.

5. Summary of Internal Communication Strategy

The coordinator has established an internal communication strategy that includes channels and means of communication with all partners, as described in the previous sections. Table 3 summarizes these communication means.

Table 3: Summary Hydro4U communication strategy

Communication	Description	Frequency	Format	Communicator	Recipient Attendee /
Email communication	individual communication to inform specific project members about certain issues	Daily work	Email communication, also using mailing lists	All Hydro4U partners	All Hydro4U partners
Telephone communication	individual communication to inform specific project members about certain issues	Daily work	Telephone calls	All Hydro4U partners	All Hydro4U partners

Sync&Share Data sharing platform	Data sharing platform	Daily work	Data sharing platform	Coordinator	All Hydro4U partners
GA meeting	Meeting of the Hydro4U General Assembly	At least once a year	Meeting at partner institutions	Coordinator	GA members
SC meeting	Meeting of the Hydro4U Steering Committee	At least twice a year	Meeting at partner institutions or conference call	Coordinator	GA members
DB meeting	Meeting of the Hydro4U Demonstration Board	At least every two months	Conference call	Coordinator	DB members
D&C Secretariat	Meeting to plan future D&C actions	At least every two month	Conference call	SEZ	WP leaders and country representatives
WP leaders meeting	Unofficial meeting of the WP leaders to discuss current status and work package activities	Monthly	Conference call	Coordinator	WP leaders
Internal calendar	Calendar containing all projects events, communication and dissemination activities	Updated monthly	Electronic calendar	Coordinator	All Hydro4U partners
Website News section	Section within the Hydro4U website containing highlights of the latest news	Total project duration	Website entry	Coordinator	Public
EEAB recommendation report	Report of EEAB that contains all recommendations and feedback on the project's progress	Every 12 months	Document / report	EEAB members	All Hydro4U partners
CO report to EC	Technical and financial reports informing the European Commission on the current status on the project	After 18, 36, 48, 60 months	Document / report	Coordinator	European Commission
Project management help desk	The coordinator's project office acts as an internal help desk for all inquiries and clarifications	Total Project duration	Other	Coordinator	All Hydro4U partners

	regarding the project's implementation, reporting and regulations				
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6. Annex

6.1. Hydro4U Contact Form

The online contact data form can be found [here](#).

Background:

This registration form is best viewed on a desktop

This is a contact form that needs to be filled by all project members which defines the roles of each member in the project for ease of communication and facilitation.

1. All contact data will be kept, accessed and maintained by the technical University of Munich (TUM).
2. The contact data of the lead representatives (name and email) of all partners will be shared by TUM to all project members
3. The contact data of the dissemination and exploitation secretariats (name and email) will be shared by TUM to Steinbeis

All the contact details will be used exclusively within the project Hydro4U and will not be shared with any third parties

Partner Acronym *	<input type="text"/> Other: <input type="text"/>
First Name *	<input type="text"/>
Last name *	<input type="text"/>
Email *	<input type="text"/>
Tel. Number *	<input type="text"/> <small>Format: +491769002111</small>
Mobile number (Optional)	<input type="text"/> <small>Optional</small>
Organisation *	<input type="text"/>
Position in organisation	<input type="text"/>
Department	<input type="text"/>
Address (department)	<input type="text"/>
City/Town	<input type="text"/>
post code	<input type="text"/>
country	<input type="text"/>
website (Department)	<input type="text"/>
Board Member	<input type="text"/> <small>Multiple selection is possible</small>
ROLE in project *	<input type="text"/> <small>Multiple selection is possible</small>
Comments	<input type="text"/> <small>Any comments or remarks</small>

* Mandatory fields

