



**Dissemination and communication activities (press releases, e-newsletter, social network broadcasting, factsheets, policy brief, report cards, final brochure)**

## **Deliverable D6.3**

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**ESMERALDA**

**Enhancing ecosystem services mapping for policy and decision making**

<http://esmeralda-project.eu/>



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## Preface

One of the main objectives of WP6 'Dissemination & Knowledge Exchange' is the effective dissemination and communication of ESMERALDA outcomes across stakeholders, researchers and the general public. To ensure effective dissemination and communication different approaches were used during the first 18 months of the project implementation. To ensure the broadest impact and highest level of dissemination all ESMERALDA partners are actively engaged in the process. The following report describes the communication and dissemination activities carried out to this point.

## Summary

To ensure that the aims of the dissemination and communication activities within ESMERALDA are met, professionally and effectively multiple modes of dissemination based on traditional and innovative methods are used.

Up-to-date noteworthy information from ESMERALDA and for topics relevant to the project is delivered regularly through the news rubric on the project website and relevant social networks.

The ESMERALDA accounts in the social media (Twitter, Facebook, Google +, and LinkedIn) are actively used to ensure the widest possible impact and outreach of project related results, news and events. The dissemination and communication activities are carried in accordance with the project's specificities, as well as with the functionalities and requirements of each of the four social networks.

Project's e-newsletters are produced every 6 months and contain a synthesis of the most important news and results achieved during the relevant period. Each issue is widely disseminated to the newsletter subscribers and to the ESMERALDA partners for further distribution to their institutional channels and personal contacts. All issues are also available for free download in the Media Center.

Throughout the project and especially when significant results are achieved, press releases are issued to disseminate results. ESMERALDA is using the channels of EurekAlert!, one of the world largest online distributors of science news that reaches out to more than 5000 mass media and independent science journalists. All press releases can be found on the project website.

ESMERALDA country fact sheets were prepared for each EU member state as part of task 2.1: Stakeholder identification and initial analysis of activities. The initial analysis draws upon information collected by ESMERALDA project partners and previous relevant work on ecosystem mapping and assessment activities and policy and research activities in connection to that.

A new interview rubric gives possibility to project stakeholders and general public to receive better impression on the work and research interests of ESMERALDA project members.

Video reports from important ESMERALDA events provide deeper insights to all interested parties.

An overview power point presentation helps partners to present the ESMERALDA project in a concise yet complete manner.

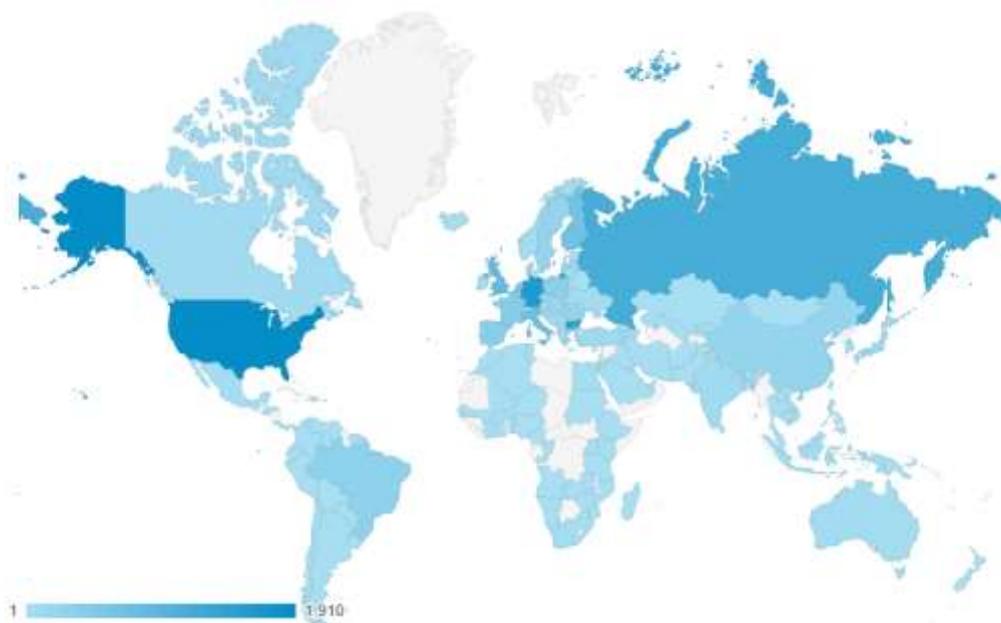
## 1. Dissemination and communication activities

### 1.1. ESMERALDA website

The project website (<http://esmeralda-project.eu/>) was created in the beginning of the project to serve as a main information hub and a news distributor. The website consists of two platforms – external website and Internal Communication Platform (ICP) to ensure the smooth communication both between project partners, and between the project and external audiences. The public website features information about the project and partners involved in it, as well as dedicated news and events sections, and a project library. The Media Centre provides easy access to key dissemination materials, including logo, brochure, posters, newsletters, videos etc.

Since its creation, the project website is enjoying a growing numbers of visitors. A total of 10,535 users have interacted with the ESMERALDA website, realizing more than 53,000 page views and 16,175 sessions. Out of the total visitor numbers, 66% are new and 33% are returning visitors, demonstrating that 1/3 of the website audience is engaging with project content on an on-going basis. The average page depth of the website scores 3.3 pages per session.

The geographic distribution of ESMERALDA website visits (Fig 1) shows that the project has engaged audiences across the world. The website has been visited from a total of 142 countries, with most visitors coming from: USA - 1,910, Germany - 1,582, Bulgaria – 1,448, Russia – 1,153, UK – 811, Italy – 705, Finland – 647, The Netherlands – 530, France – 428 and Belgium – 400.



**Figure 1:** Map of the geographic distribution of ESMERALDA website audiences.

## 1.2. ESMERALDA news

Important ESMERALDA-relevant information (including job and article alerts, forthcoming events announcements, etc.) is delivered to the targeted audiences and the general public on a regular basis mainly through the project website ([www.esmeralda-project.eu](http://www.esmeralda-project.eu)). Overall 83 news items were published on the website during the first 18 months of the project (or an average 5 items per month). With the intention to facilitate reading, the announcements are divided in two major categories: 1) News and 2) Events:

[News announcements](#) – a total of 55 ESMERALDA-derived and relevant news have been published on the project website until 20 July 2016. The website visitors were kept regularly informed through 39 news pieces on a number of topics (meetings outcomes; ESMERALDA-relevant articles, books and reports focusing on biodiversity, ecosystem services and their functioning and many others), 3 events announcements, 10 job offers and 3 article alerts.

[Events announcements](#) – altogether 28 ESMERALDA relevant events were announced on the project website. Two of them were organised by ESMERALDA, the other 26 dealt with initiatives similar to ESMERALDA. They are published with the aim to inform individuals visiting the website about important forthcoming national and international meetings, workshops, conferences and congresses and also to assist the ESMERALDA members to select the most suitable event to represent the project and disseminate its results to the wide scientific community.

In addition to the website, aspiring to reach out to an audience as large as possible, all news were also distributed via the ESMERALDA social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+) profiles.

## 1.3. ESMERALDA social media

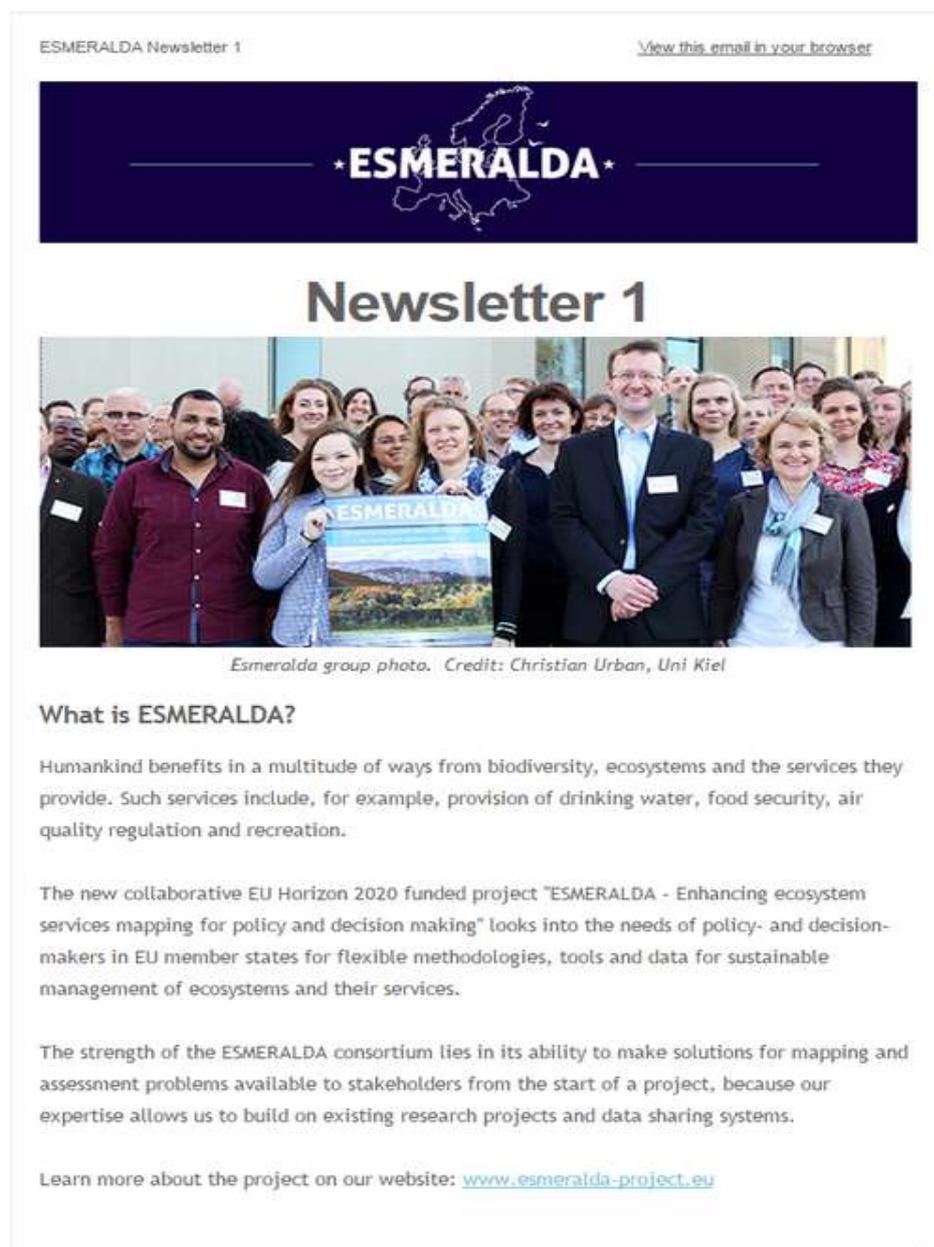
To increase the project visibility and to promote ESMERALDA-related news and results, accounts for 5 major social networks, namely [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Google +](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#) were set up. The ESMERALDA profiles have been created to reflect the general project branding and in an engaging and interactive way. Each account aims at a different group of users reflecting the specificities of the network itself. Twitter is used for short and catchy updates on news and events, as well as forming community through Twitter lists and for livestreaming of conferences. Facebook is used for longer posts, creating and promoting events, and sharing photo albums. Despite Google + is still relatively unpopular among users and offers similar characteristics to Facebook, an account is supported as the networks gives a similar experience to a blogging space. YouTube serves as an alternative channel to communicate project news via videos as a medium. LinkedIn is used for professional discussions around a topic, as well as for networking and promoting within professional circles.

The ESMERALDA social media groups are fully operational and in process of increasing popularity and member participation. All project news and events are posted through RSS feeds on the Twitter and Facebook account, while posts and discussions are specifically tailored for Google + and LinkedIn. By the end of July 2016, the number of posts on the ESMERALDA Facebook page was 50 and it has got 64 followers. Respectively, the ESMERALDA Twitter profile has 212 tweets and 199 followers. Google+ has **7,882 views** and 15 posts, while the LinkedIn account has 23 members and 7 discussions started.

## 1.4. ESMERALDA e-newsletter

A news bulletin in electronic format, containing and highlighting news of interest for the ESMERALDA stakeholders was launched in August 2015. The ESMERALDA newsletter is issued on a 6 months basis and contains news, details on upcoming events, results and facts, publications and any other activities, which are of interest to the project stakeholders and the general public and can help increase the project visibility. These could also be interviews given for local media, published articles, public lectures, and presentations given at seminars or workshops. To maximize the effect of the news they are combined with relevant photographs and/or multimedia if possible and when available.

During the period from February 2015 to July 2016, two issues (1 and 2) of the [ESMERALDA e-newsletter](#) have been published (August 2015 and March 2016). The newsletters are sent out to all newsletter subscribers and the ESMERALDA consortium and Advisory Board members. The newsletters were also made public via the Media Centre on the website.



The image shows a screenshot of the ESMERALDA Newsletter 1 email. At the top left, it says "ESMERALDA Newsletter 1" and at the top right, there is a link "View this email in your browser". Below this is a dark blue banner with the ESMERALDA logo, which consists of a white outline of Europe and the word "ESMERALDA" in white capital letters. Underneath the banner, the title "Newsletter 1" is displayed in a large, bold, black font. Below the title is a group photo of many people, with one person in the center holding a sign that says "ESMERALDA". Below the photo, there is a caption: "Esmeralda group photo. Credit: Christian Urban, Uni Kiel". The main content of the newsletter is titled "What is ESMERALDA?" and contains three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph discusses the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystems. The second paragraph describes the project as a collaborative EU Horizon 2020 funded project. The third paragraph highlights the strength of the consortium. At the bottom, there is a link to the project website: "Learn more about the project on our website: [www.esmeralda-project.eu](http://www.esmeralda-project.eu)".

Figure 2: ESMERALDA e-newsletter issue 1.



## 1.6. ESMERALDA country factsheets

The first phase of ESMERALDA was dedicated to the identification of relevant stakeholders and stocktaking of the implementation of MAES (Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services) in all EU member states. One key outcome of this phase are the EU Country Fact sheets (MS09 Fact sheets per member state/case study available) containing information about each country's MAES-related activities, implementation prerequisites and needs as well as relevant policy and research activities. The fact sheets were produced based on information collected by the ESMERALDA project partners as well as related policy and research activities such as the MAES Working Group and the MESEU project. All fact sheets are now available on [BISE](#), the Biodiversity Information System for Europe, for the different countries within the platform's MAES-related developments in the [European Union section](#).



Figure 4: ESMERALDA country fact sheets.

## 1.7. ESMERALDA interviews

An [Insider rubric](#) was launched in May 2016. Every few weeks, profiles of ESMERALDA consortium members are posted to give the project stakeholders and general public insights on their research interests and role in the project as well as what motivates scientists in their work, and how are they hoping to contribute to societal welfare with their research. The rubric started with two profiles featured – this of the ESMERALDA coordinator Dr Benjamin Burkhard who pioneers the initiative, alongside SYKE Senior Researcher Dr Petteri Vihervaara.

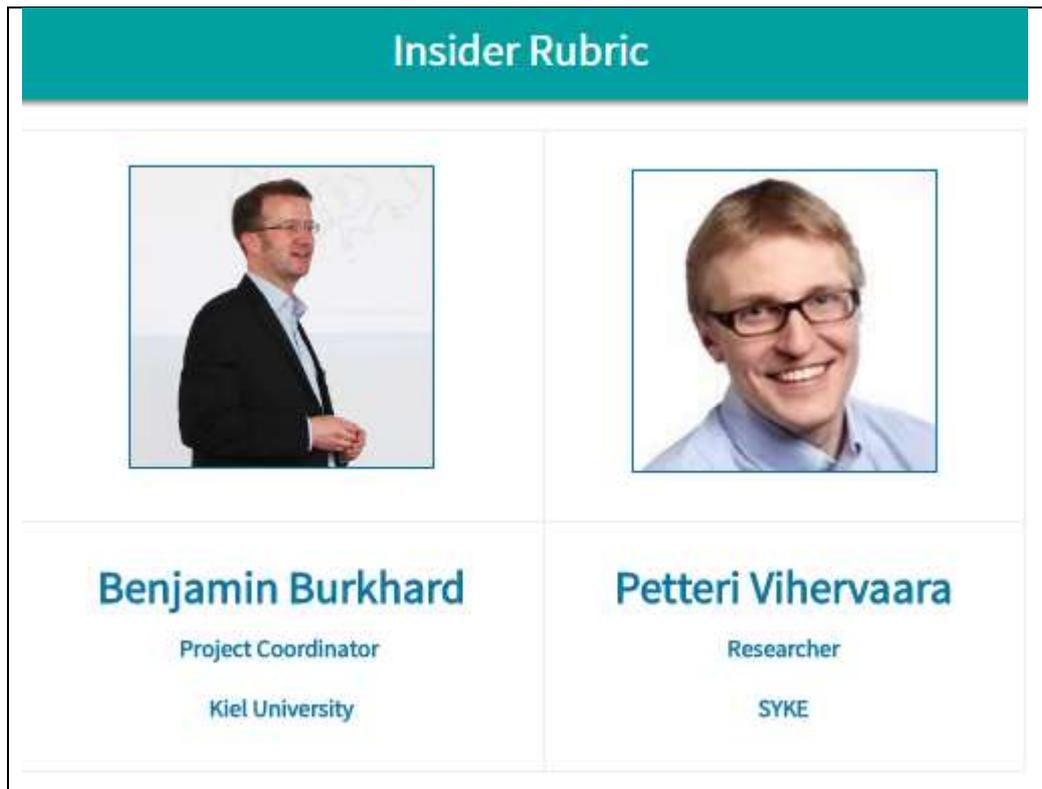


Figure 5: ESMERALDA insider rubric examples.

### 1.8. ESMERALDA video reports

Impressions, outcomes and other useful information from events organised by ESMERALDA can be found in [video reports](#) prepared by the WP6 dissemination team. Two videos (first ESMERALDA Stakeholder Workshop which took place from 13 to 16 October 2015 in Riga, Latvia, and the second ESMERALDA workshop, which took place from 14 to 16 April 2016 in Nottingham, UK) are ready. The video clips are uploaded on the project's [YouTube Channel](#), and also available through the Media Center on the project website. They were also disseminated via the social media and as a part of the ESMERALDA newsletters.

First Stakeholder Workshop, Riga, Latvia



*Reporting back from the first ESMERALDA Stakeholder Workshop, 13 - 16 October 2015, Riga, Latvia*

Workshop, Nottingham, UK



*Reporting back from the ESMERALDA Workshop in Nottingham, April 2016,*

Figure 6: ESMERALDA video report examples.

## 1.9. **ESMERALDA overview presentation**

An [overview presentation](#) of the ESMERALDA project was created with the aim to make the presentation of the project consistent. It provides general information about the project, its background, objectives and targets, relation to other projects and ongoing activities, an overview of the ESMERALDA consortium, the project time plan and working phases, as well as the political relevance.



Figure 7: ESMERALDA overview presentation.

## 2. **Future outlooks**

The project dissemination and communication activities will be performed on a continuous basis throughout the project lifetime and in accordance with D6.2 General Communication and Dissemination Strategy and implementation plan. Dissemination and communication activities will be a subject of development and adjustment to the newest technologies and practices in the field, to keep up with the fast passed communication environment and ensure continuous engagement of audiences.