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D6.2 Report on engagement with relevant projects and initiatives

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BESTMAP
BEHAVIOURAL, ECOLOGICAL & SOCIO-ECONOMIC TOOLS FOR MODELLING AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Report on engagement with relevant projects and initiatives

Deliverable 6.2

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BESTMAP
Behavioural, Ecological and Socio-economic Tools for Modelling Agricultural Policy

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Preface

BESTMAP (Behavioural, Ecological and Socio-economic Tools for Modelling Agricultural Policy) aims to develop a new flexible, interoperable and customisable framework that will take account of farmers' needs and effectively monitor policy impacts on natural, social and cultural assets in rural areas.

BESTMAP will develop and analyse the outcomes of a behavioural theoretical modelling framework that takes account of the complexity of farmers' decision-making. Additionally, computer models will help build up an operational framework.

BESTMAP will implement the newly developed framework in five regions across Europe, holding diverse agricultural, socio-economic and political backgrounds:

- Humber Catchment (UK)
- Mulde River Basin (DE)
- South Moravia (CZ)
- Bačka Region (RS)
- Catalonia (ES)

BESTMAP specialists will develop a simple-to-use web-tool, helping policymakers analyse the adoption of various agri-environmental schemes, and scale up the innovative approach in the project to model agricultural policy impacts on a regional and national level.

To achieve this, the BESTMAP project is structured around seven Work Packages (WPs). This document constitutes the second version of the Plan of Engagement. It has been developed within WP6 - Capacity Building and Dissemination, with the help and support of other six Work Packages. It aims to further develop a strategy on establishing strong connections with institutions (on local, national, and EU level), projects and initiatives relevant to the BESTMAP project.

After the second version of the Plan of Engagement is published, this document should be treated as a living instrument, and updated on a regular basis, during the entire duration of the project. The next official update—MS14 Plan of Engagement (Update 2) will be published in month 36.

The current version of this document is being developed in accordance with D6.2 Report on engagement with relevant projects and initiatives in M54 of the BESTMAP duration and serves as an update to the previously delivered Milestone MS13. Throughout the deliverable a report on the carried out engagement activities will be provided, with a specific focus on

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collaborations with previously identified European organisations, relevant projects and initiatives. Where no activity has been possible a justification shall be provided.

Summary

In order to enhance the visibility of BESTMAP project and its outcomes and to explore potential common activities and complementarities with other projects, initiatives, networks, and policy makers at EU level, the Plan of Engagement is developed and it will act as the strategy for creating a bridge between BESTMAP and all the other relevant projects or institutions. This document is an updated version of the Milestone 12 Plan of Engagement and it will serve as a strategic channel of relationship-building processes with identified related parties from now on.

External relationships and engagement with relevant parties is a continuous process between BESTMAP and other parties. Therefore, the Plan of Engagement is considered as a living document that will be extended and changed as the engagement with all parties evolved.

1. Engagement with European Institutions

1.1. European Commission (DG AGRI, DG ENV etc.)

1.1.1. DG AGRI

The Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) is responsible for EU policy on agriculture and rural development and deals with all aspects of the common agricultural policy (CAP). DG AGRI produces economic and quantitative studies of EU agriculture and rural areas as well as short, medium and long-term forecasts of EU and world agricultural commodity markets.

An online workshop entitled “Improving the environmental and social capacity of EC impact assessment tools” was held on 14th and 15th of July 2020 and attracted 37 external attendees, mainly from DG AGRI and JRC. Plenary sessions and three thematic breakout discussion groups were organised.

During the session about agricultural policy impact modelling, participants discussed who in the commission needs tools, the need for models in the policy cycle, regulation, inter-institutional agreements and the need for an impact assessment on amendments to proposed policies during the co-decision process with the Council and the European Parliament. Changes on how impact assessment is conducted in the modelling were also debated.

Another group discussed the Post-2020 CAP and sustainable development goals (SDGs) indicators. The group looked at which social or environmental indicators are currently missing. An essential topic for debate was which indicators are important for modelling tools already in use, together with the role of models in transferring from results indicators to impact indicators.

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Finally, the third group discussed macroeconomic and ecosystem services model linkages. The importance of farmer decision-making was highlighted and the limitations of current tools in capturing this, especially with regard to complex behaviour were recognised.

1.1.2. DG ENV

The Directorate-General for Environment is the European Commission department responsible for EU policy on the environment. It aims to protect, preserve and improve the environment for present and future generations, proposing and implementing policies that ensure a high level of environmental protection and preserve the quality of life of EU citizens. It also makes sure that Member States apply EU environmental law correctly and represents the European Union in environmental matters at international meetings.
BESTMAP Project Coordinator Guy Ziv is the link to Ms. Natalia Brzezina, a Policy officer for BESTMAP, for engaging BESTMAP with all DGs including DG AGRI and DG ENV. On September 26 2019, there was a meeting with the DGs team when the future meetings were announced to be around month 20 and 40.

1.2. Joint Research Centre (JRC)

The Joint Research Centre is the Commission's science and knowledge service. The JRC employs scientists to carry out research in order to provide independent scientific advice and support to EU policy. The main responsibilities of JRC that are the foundation of possible synergy with BESTMAP are creation and management of knowledge to support European policies with independent evidence as well as development of innovative tools and making them available to policy makers.

The cooperation between BESTMAP and JRC will be facilitated by one of our Science Advisory Board Mr. Ignacio Perez Dominiquez. JRC representatives (researchers, policy analysts, environmental economic analysts) attended an online workshop entitled “Improving the environmental and social capacity of EC impact assessment tools” held in July 2020 (see Section 1.1.1).

In May 2023, the project coordinators of BESTMAP and MIND STEP met up with Mr. Ignacio Perez-Dominguez in Seville for a discussion of the projects. Additionally, Mr Ignacio Perez-Dominguez attended BESTMAP’s Final Dissemination Event in Brussels and participated as a speaker in the panel discussion, in which six experts gave their suggestions on how to integrate the AGRIMODELS cluster projects’ outcomes into policy recommendations.

1.3. European Parliamentary Research Service

The European Parliamentary Research Service is the European Parliament's in-house research department and think tank. Its mission is to assist Members in their parliamentary work by providing them with independent, objective and authoritative analysis of, and research on, policy issues relating to the European Union.

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It may happen that the Commission requires impact assessment on amendments to the CAP and other directives during the process of exchange between Parliament and Council - after the Directive passes out of the DGs and EC. One European Parliamentary Research Service representative attended the “Improving the environmental and social capacity of EC impact assessment tools” workshop held in July 2020 (see Section 1.1.1).

2. Engagement with RUR-04-2018 projects

In the framework of the RUR-04-2018 published by the European Commission as part of the H2020 programme, three projects (AGRICORE, MIND STEP and BESTMAP) received funding to address the challenges posed in this topic. As part of the Grant Agreement signed with the EC, at least for some of these projects, the consortium participating them agreed on forming a cluster with the other projects funded within the same topic. Therefore, the project coordinators of the above-mentioned projects commit to establish the AGRIMODELS cluster, which will serve as the coordinating entity between the projects.

2.1. MIND STEP specific

MIND STEP will improve exploitation of available agricultural and biophysical data and will include the individual decision making (IDM) unit in policy models. Based on a common data framework MIND STEP will develop IDM models, including agent-based models, focusing on different topics in an integrated manner in different regional case studies. The IDM models will be estimated and calibrated using agricultural statistics and big datasets, drawing on established econometric and evolving machine learning techniques and using both traditional models of optimising behaviour and theories from behavioural economics. MIND STEP will closely cooperate with a range of stakeholders to co-create and apply the MIND STEP model toolbox to selected regional, national and EU wide policy cases.

2.2. AGRICORE specific

AGRICORE project proposes a novel tool for improving the current capacity to model policies dealing with agriculture by taking advantage of the latest progress in modelling approaches and ICT. Specifically, the AGRICORE tool will be built as an agent-based approach where each farm is to be modelled as an autonomous decision-making entity which individually assesses its own context and makes decisions on the basis of its current situation and expectations. This modelling approach will allow simulating the interaction between farms and their context (which will account for environment, rural integration, ecosystem services, land use and markets) at various geographic scales – from regional to global.The AGRICORE tool will be made as a highly modular and customisable suite, and it will be released as an **open-source** project so institutions can transparently update and improve the tool as needs arise.

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2.3. Engagement

The following points describe the topics for which the three projects have agreed on collaborating:

- Setup and configuration of the AGRIMODELS CLUSTER which currently includes AGRICORE, BESTMAP and MIND STEP project consortia.
- Development of a web page which will provide a unique access for the three projects. This web site will describe the topic where the projects were funded. It will also include a calendar for events related to agriculture policy modelling and impact assessment as well as social media summaries for the publications done by the three projects.
- To meet on a regular basis to review the identified synergies and coordinate efforts within the projects. During the first year of the project's execution, their representatives will meet (either online or face to face) at least once every two months, and even more frequently should it be required. During the rest of the project timeline, the representatives will meet at least once every quarter.
- The Communication and Dissemination experts from each one of the projects will regularly analyse in detail the different public events that were planned in their Grant Agreements, identifying potential synergies and aiming to optimise the communication with external stakeholders. During the first stage of collaboration, C&D representatives agreed on having the joint list of the stakeholders that will be contacted on Cluster level.
  Additionally, three projects jointly crafted the PR article about the official establishment of the Cluster, its main focus areas and objectives. The article was distributed on projects' websites, social media, and EurekAlert! online platform. Information about AGRIMODELS cluster members' activities and progress is regularly included in all three projects' newsletters.

  Communication and Dissemination representatives of the three projects created a joint online repository to ensure easier communication and information exchange, as well as the availability of communication and dissemination materials.
- Campaign about the AGRIMODELS cluster will be launched on all three projects' social media channels (primarily Linkedin and Twitter)
- One person from each project (potentially the signatories of this document) will become a member of the External Experts Advisory Boards (in the BESTMAP, this group is called the Science Advisory Board) established in the other projects. This will enhance keeping track of the developments done by each project, fostering collaboration not only between the coordinators but also with the other consortium members. As a consequence, the members of the corresponding EEABs will be invited to attend the general meetings held by the other projects.
- All the projects will share some needs regarding the access to agriculture (or related) data which could be available from different agencies at EU or national levels. This includes, among others, FADN and FSS data sources. Moreover, the three projects might be also interested in results from previous research initiatives (e.g. IFM-CAP

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data and algorithms). In order to promote better and more coordinated access to these sources, the project representatives will coordinate the requests to the owners of the information. This does not mean that single access requests will be done combining the three projects as the needs might be slightly different in each case but will ensure that the participants learn from the request access process from the others and that avoid requesting the same information twice (unless required by the provider of such data).

- Once established, the AGRIMODELS cluster took the initiative to attend and host different seminars, related to the objectives of the projects. Some of these events include:
    - In May 2022, the three sister projects gathered for a joint meeting with the DG AGRI in Brussels, Belgium.The purpose of the gathering was to update the DG AGRI representatives on the current results of each member of the Cluster, as well as to discuss further tasks, challenges and potential collaboration. In particular, the workshop focused on the data, modelling and policy perspectives of DG AGRI and the immediate way to meet them. BESTMAP was represented by the project's coordinator Prof. Guy Ziv from the University of Leeds, UK, with an informative presentation on the recent progress and achievements of the project.
    - From October 5 to 7, 2022, the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) collaborated with the Thünen Institute, a MIND STEP partner, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, and Humboldt University to host a seminar in Berlin, Germany. Titled "Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the EU Agriculture and Food Sector: Potential and Limits of Climate Mitigation Policies and Pricing Instruments," the event featured representatives from the three AGRIMODELS Cluster projects.Dr. Manolis Tyllianakis, a BESTMAP partner from the University of Leeds, led the presentation during the seminar. Focused on "BESTMAP - Discrete Choice Analysis of Farmers' Willingness to Accept for Adoption of Agri-Environmental Schemes in Three Countries," the presentation delved into factors influencing the adoption of four agri-environmental contracts.
    - Between 27 and 29 March 2023, the 97th Annual Conference of the Agricultural Economics Society (AES) took place at the University of Warwick, UK. The three-day event showcased various presentations from leading experts, poster presentations, as well as workshops on bio-economic modelling, the Green Revolution, uptake of low-carbon practices by farmers and more. Amongst the participants was BESTMAP's partner Dr. Alena Schmidt of the University of Basel, who represented BESTMAP at the event, as part of a joint workshop with the AGRIMODELS cluster. In a dedicated presentation titled "Benefits & challenges to linking CGE/PE models with agent-based models," she presented results from a workshop hosted by BESTMAP in May of 2022 on linking CGE/PE models with agent-based models. Modellers from MIND STEP and Agricore engaged in a discussion about common challenges and opportunities linking these models present.
    - On 7th February 2024, BESTMAP hosted its Final Dissemination Event in Brussels, focusing on the role of analytical tools in CAP policy debates. Titled

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"Research Lessons to Inform Future CAP Reform," the event was coordinated by project partners - RISE Foundation, in collaboration with BESTMAP's sister projects within the AGRIMODELS cluster, all under the Forum for the Future of Agriculture initiative.Representatives from the three AGRIMODELS projects, presented thoroughly their goals and outcomes.The event's interactive nature allowed the audience - stakeholders and policymakers to engage with each speaker through Q&A sessions. The proceedings concluded with a panel discussion. The panel featured members of the Joint Research Centre at the European Commission, political analysts, scientists, DG AGRI members, and the Director of EU's Agri & Forestry-Related Policies at the European Landowners' Organisation. The overarching goal of the event was to formulate recommendations based on the comprehensive research conducted throughout the project, ultimately influencing the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The outcome of the event is to base the foundation of the agenda for the upcoming Forum for the Future of Agriculture annual conference in late March.

3. Engagement with SUPREMA

SUpport for Policy RElevant Modelling of Agriculture (SUPREMA) project proposes a meta-platform that supports modelling groups linked already through various other platforms and networks. SUPREMA should help close the gaps between expectations of policy makers and the actual capacity of models to deliver relevant policy analysis.

BESTMAP will establish a direct link with a project aimed at supporting modelling groups and it will contribute to bridge the gap between expectations of policy makers and the actual capacity of models.

SUPREMA will collaborate closely with RUR-04 projects. SUPREMA policy scenarios might be useful for co-design new modelling framework by BESTMAP. SUPREMA will invite BESTMAP to the roadmap workshop and the policy narratives from SUPREMA 2nd workshop will be provided.

The collaboration between BESTMAP and SUPREMA will be facilitated by one of our Science Advisory Board (Witzke Peter) leading a WP of SUPREMA.

In order to collect information that can help in identification of present and future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) scenarios/indicators that could have significant influence on Ecosystem Services (EESS) and socio-economic decisions and that will be used as a foundation for BESTMAP co-design processes, information from three SUPREMA projects' workshops held in 2018/2019 are retrieved:

a) In the workshop on 'Needs' held on 1st March, 2018 in Brussels two objectives were addressed from a policy perspective: to capture views of stakeholders on the future societal challenges of the CAP and other related policy areas as well as to identify stakeholder needs for model-based analysis (both medium-term until 2030 and

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long-term until 2050) which may affect the future agri-food system and may require model based policy analysis for an evidence-based decision making.

b) Workshop on ‘Narratives’ held on 5th March 2019 in Brussels developed narratives of the impact analyses in SUPREMA and served as input for the scenarios to be run with the SUPREMA models

c) Workshop on ‘Strategic Prospects’ held on11th February 2020 in Brussels aimed to (i) draft findings of ‘Model enhancement and integration’ to be presented, with a focus on testing the SUPREMA model family based on the ‘Narratives’; (ii) capture feedback of Stakeholders to narrative based scenarios and related outcomes, and (iii) start identifying findings which can feed into a ‘Strategic Paper on research needs’. This workshop was attended by the BESTMAP project coordinator.

BESTMAP Project Coordinator, together with the project coordinators of the MINDSTEP and AGRICORE projects attend the third meeting of the External Advisory Board of SUPREMA project on June 26th 2020. During this meeting, AGRIMODELS Cluster representatives (Coordinators of the BESTMAP, MINDSTEP and AGRICORE projects) were mostly involved in the section of presentation of the SUPREMA roadmap in which they have contributed to the refinement of the proposed roadmap by emphasising that ABMs should get a higher level of attention in the roadmap suggested.

In addition, SUPREMA representatives attended the “Improving the environmental and social capacity of EC impact assessment tools” workshop held in July 2020 (see Section 1.1.1).

4. Engagement with European Research Infrastructure Consortia (ERIC)

4.1. General

The European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) is a specific legal form that facilitates the establishment and operation of Research Infrastructures with European interest. The ERIC allows the establishment and operation of new or existing Research Infrastructures on a non-economic basis.

4.2. LifeWatch specific

LifeWatch is a new European 'Big Data' e-infrastructure to support biodiversity research. It aims to advance biodiversity and ecosystem research and to provide major contributions to addressing big environmental challenges such as climate change by providing access through a pan-European distributed e-infrastructure to large sets of data, services and tools that enable the creation of virtual laboratories and decision-support applications.

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In collaboration with LifeWatch, BESTMAP will develop a Virtual Lab for the European-wide models. The Virtual Lab will allow using either BESTMAP pre-computed scenarios or uploading (in agreed format, metadata and semantics) the output of a few economic models. LifeWatch-ERIC will incorporate this as a permanent Virtual Lab on their ICT server and maintain support after the BESTMAP project ends.

Over the course of the BESTMAP duration, the project has been designing an interactive policy dashboard, which incorporates new queries and data panels, going beyond classical map representation. The new smart visualisation is able to present the status and evolution of selected policy indicators in a single view in comparison with the expected targets. The dashboard has been designed to be compatible with the LifeWatch infrastructure. Hence, BESTMAP expects that LifeWatch will integrate the project dashboard beyond the BESTMAP lifespan.

5. Engagement with Group on Earth Observation (GEO)

5.1. General

GEO is a unique global network connecting government institutions, academic and research institutions, data providers, businesses, engineers, scientists and experts to create innovative solutions to global challenges at a time of exponential data growth, human development and climate change that transcend national and disciplinary boundaries. The unprecedented global collaboration of experts helps identify gaps and reduce duplication in the areas of sustainable development and sound environmental management.

GEO is a partnership of more than 100 national governments and in excess of 100 Participating Organisations that envisions a future where decisions and actions for the benefit of humankind are informed by coordinated, comprehensive and sustained Earth observations.

5.2. GEO-BON specific

The Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON) is an initiative aimed at improving the availability of biodiversity change data to decision makers and scientists in support of policy. GEO BON initiates and coordinates efforts to design and implement interoperable national and regional biodiversity monitoring programs. Through its global network of organisations and experts, GEO BON supports the sharing and dissemination of information and technology for biodiversity observations. GEO BON also supports the application of the most recent scientific knowledge to advance biodiversity observations collection, integration and interpretation.

GEO BON is, among other things, focused on developing a network of observation systems that delivers enhanced and harmonised biodiversity information to facilitate better decision making from local to global scales. The work of GEO BON is organised in different working groups representing the Essential Biodiversity Variables (EBV) as well as Essential

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Ecosystem service variables (EESV). The BESTMAP biodiversity and ecosystem services modelling components benefit from GEO BON development through the membership of Anna Cord in the working groups "Ecosystem Services" and "EcoCode - Modelling Life on Earth".

In July 2020, the concept, aims and expected outcomes of the BESTMAP project were presented during the poster section of the GEO BON Open Science Conference & All Hands Meeting 2020 held online from 7th to 9th of July. Further, BESTMAP work was presented at the "GEO BON Global Conference: Monitoring Biodiversity for Action" in Montreal in October 2023.

6. Engagement with H2020 and FP7 projects on Cluster level

Project name	Short description	Duration
SURE-Farm	Towards SUstainable and REsilient EU FARMing systems aims to analyse, assess and improve the resilience and sustainability of farms and farming systems in the EU. For this purpose, SURE-Farm creates scenarios and a novel and comprehensive resilience-enabling framework, develops a set of advanced risk assessment and management tools as well as an improved demographic assessment model and a resilience assessment tool for policies, and in conjunction with stakeholders, co-creates and applies an integrated resilience assessment model and co-designs implementation roadmaps	start date: June 1st 2017 end date: May 31st 2021
SUSFANS	SUSFANS' overall objective is to build the conceptual framework, the evidence base and analytical tools for underpinning EU-wide food policies with respect to their impact on consumer diet and their implications for nutrition and public health in the EU, the environment, the competitiveness of the EU agri-food sectors, and global food and nutrition security.	start date: April 1st 2015 end date: March 31st 2021
SIM4NEXUS	Sustainable Integrated Management FOR the NEXUS of water-land-food-energy-climate for a resource-efficient Europe increases the understanding of how water management, food production and consumption, energy supply and land use policies are linked together, and how they relate to climate action. The research activities offered solid ground on the benefits of using a Nexus approach, primarily to exploit and create synergies between policies and avoid conflicts between policies. European policies for water-land-energy-food-climate sectors reckon with trade-offs in other sectors. However, opportunities for	start date: June 1st 2016 end date: June 30st 2020

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	synergies are less explored and there is no institutionalised procedure for a comprehensive Nexus assessment of new policies. New integrating themes (e.g., circular and low-carbon economy related to resource efficiency and planetary boundaries) can stimulate a Nexus approach.	
Biomonitor	BioMonitor addresses the information gap in bioeconomy research by re-structuring its existing data and modelling framework. The ultimate goal of the project is to get a clearer picture of how bioeconomy affects our lives. The BioMonitor project will establish a sustainable and robust framework different stakeholders can use to monitor and measure the bioeconomy and its various impacts in relation to the EU and its Member States.	start date: June 1st 2018 end date: May 31st 2022
LandSense	The LandSense Citizen Observatory aims to aggregate innovative EO technologies, mobile devices, community-based environmental monitoring, data collection, interpretation and information delivery systems to empower communities to monitor and report on their environment. A number of key characteristics fundamental to the LandSense Citizen Observatory include: ● Bidirectional information flows between different communities (i.e. citizens, scientists, policymakers, industries, SMEs, NGOs, etc.); ● Involve new citizen functions in accumulating and using information; ● Support multi-scalar government from the EU level downwards; ● Complement EO (i.e. remotely sensed) data and state-organised data collection ● Give communities access to easily-understandable information needed for decision-making.	start date: September 1st 2016 end date: December 31st 2020
FLINT	FLINT defines Farm Level Indicators to improve the policy evaluation on (amongst others) cross compliance, sustainability and innovation in the CAP. The data collection on these indicators has ideally to be linked to the current Farm Accountancy Data Network in which data on costs of production and incomes are collected on 75.000 farms over the EU-27, but alternatives will be explored. In the project foreseen harmonised data on the Profit, Planet and People indicators will be collected in a pilot-network in several European countries with an invitation for others to join. Data will be stored in a central database (after permission of the collaborating farmers of course) and used to investigate how this date improves policy evaluation.	start date: January 1st 2014 end date: December 31st 2026

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LIFT	The role of Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) is fundamental in supporting bio-based industries growth and the market-uptake, because these projects tackle strategic aspects and cross-cutting challenges fundamental to boost the Bioeconomy. LIFT aimed at maximising the impact of CSA by valorising their outcomes and promoting the collaboration among them, and identifying gaps to be addressed to ensure a stimulating environment boosting the Bio-Based economy. LIFT's aims at mapping and analysing the results of work performed by CSAs on Bioeconomy topics funded in the last years by FP7, H2020, BBI JU and Interreg, to provide a global overview of projects' results, making them readily available, integrated and actionable by industries and policy makers.	start date: May 1st 2019 end date: April 30st 2020
UNISECO	The ambition and overarching objective is to strengthen the sustainability of European farming systems, through co-constructing improved and practice-validated strategies and incentives for the promotion of improved agro-ecological approaches. UNISECO addresses the work programme topic SFS-29-2017 and contributes to Sustainable Food Security by identifying and supporting farming systems that enable the production of healthy food while preserving the environment and bringing added value to farm households and the different stakeholders of the value chain.	start date: May 1st 2018 end date: April 30st 2021
EFFECT	The European Union's economic prosperity is linked to its natural environment. Eco-innovation and green technologies are at the heart of the European Union's policies. To accelerate eco-innovation, EU member states implemented agri-environmental funding programmes and investment grants coupled with an increased number of environmental certification and labelling schemes established by private actors. The EU-funded EFFECT project will assess the success of these initiatives through a review of past successes and failures. It will also use the lessons learned from previous initiatives to design and test new forms of contracts. The results of the project will benefit the development of a new policy evaluation framework.	start date: May 1st 2019 end date: April 30st 2023
CONSOLE	Agriculture and forestry are integral parts of the European economy and society. With about 70 % of the EU land area covered by forests or in agricultural use, primary production activities have a huge impact on preserving natural capital and job creation. But there is a need to boost innovation in the lasting delivery of agri-environmental-climate public goods (AECPGs). The CONSOLE project will build a community of practice (CoP) – multi-actor and multidisciplinary teams from 13 countries – to co-create a contractual framework to be tested in real decision-making contexts. The aim is to improve the	start date: May 1st 2019 end date: April 30st 2022

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	implementation of innovative contract solutions for the provision of AECPGs under various conditions across the EU and prepare for the future of food and farming.	
Contracts2.0	Agriculture may have positive effects on the environment if modern contract-based guidelines are followed. To ensure this is the case, new farmers should be motivated with economic incentives to align their production to environmental policies. The EU-funded Contracts 2.0 project aims to ameliorate existing contracts in the farming industry and propose new ones based on synergies. It will adopt a six-step design thinking process to propose and validate novel contracts. The project will implement a SWOT analysis based on actual results, land possession and value chain approaches to identify weaknesses, as well as eventual opportunities and dangers.	start date: May 1st 2019 end date: April 30st 2023

As several projects of the above-listed have already concluded, BESTMAP sought to engage with other ongoing and relevant research initiatives. Hence, active bilateral collaboration was established with the below-mentioned Horizon projects. Representatives from these projects were listed as subscribers for the BESTMAP bi-annual newsletter. Regular online support was also initiated through mutual sharing of updates, announcements and achievements on social media platforms.

Project Name	**Short Description**	**Duration**
SHOWCASE	SHOWCASing synergies between agriculture, biodiversity and Ecosystem services to help farmers capitalising on native biodiversity (SHOWCASE) is dedicated to the integration of biodiversity into farming practices. The project aims to deliver new insight and innovative tools facilitating the agricultural sector's transition towards more sustainable farming, and thus help meet wider societal needs.To achieve a breakthrough in the integration of biodiversity into farming, leading scientists in the field of agro-ecology and socio-economy join forces with farmer and citizen science networks, science communication specialists and nature conservation NGOs.	start date: November 1st, 2020 end date: October 31st, 2025
TUdi	TUdi integrates complementary needs regarding stakeholders as well as expertise regarding agronomy, soil management, fertilisation practices, soil science, digital farming, soil conservation, and socioeconomics to address the challenges and scope of the topic "Healthy soils for healthy food production". The project will design, test and deliver a set of tools to allow farmers, technicians, companies and government agents to carry out those	start date: July 1st, 2021 end date: June 30th, 2025

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	strategies at farm level tailoring the techniques to local conditions.	
SOLO	SOLO will identify current knowledge gaps, drivers, bottlenecks, and novel research and innovation approaches to be considered in the EU Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe' research and innovation roadmap. The project aims to create a knowledge hub for soil health research and innovation that will last beyond the project's lifespan by establishing strategic partnerships and by implementing a participatory and transparent process.	start date: Dec 1st, 2022 end date: Nov 30th, 2027

7. Engagement with Research organisations/NGOs/unions/farmers networks and national research projects in CS countries

Each Case Study will establish links with relevant farmers networks/unions, research programs, projects and Non Governmental Organisations active in the CS region. This will be facilitated by CS leaders.

Country	Form of organisation	Name of organisation	Website	Engagement activities	Contact person
DE	Farmers' Association	Landschaftspflegeverband Nordwestsachsen	https://www.lpv-nordwestsachsen.de/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers; disseminate project results	Michael Beckmann, Anna Cord
DE	Association for Landscape Conservation	Deutscher Verband für Landschaftspflege - Landesverband Sachsen	https://dvl-sachsen.de/de/2/p1/startseite-dvl-sachsen.html	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Felix Wittstock
ES	Organisation	Fundació Món Rural	http://www.fmr.cat/la-fundacio/presentacio	interested in results	Cristina Domingo / Andrés Fernández
ES	Union	Unió de Pagesos	https://uniopagesos.cat/	Participate in policy	Andrés Fernández

				workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	
ES	Organisation	Joves Agricultors i Ramaders de Catalunya	http://www.jarc.es/ca/home	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Andrés Fernández
ES	Organisation	Federació de Cooperatives Agràries de Catalunya	http://www.cooperativesagraries.cat/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Andrés Fernández
ES	Organisation	Consorci Forestal de Catalunya	https://www.forestal.cat/web/	Participate in policy workshops as member of FEDER program follow up	Cristina Domingo
ES	NGO	SEO/BirdLife Catalunya	https://www.seo.org/	Participate in policy workshops as member of FEDER program follow up	Cristina Domingo
ES	Professional organisation	Col·legi Oficial d'Enginyers Tècnics Agrícoles i Pèrits Agrícoles de Catalunya	www.agrifor.org	Participate in policy workshops as member of FEDER program follow up	Cristina Domingo
ES	University	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	https://www.uab.cat	Participate in policy workshops as member of FEDER program follow up	Cristina Domingo
UK	Organisation	Champions for the Farmed Environment	http://www.cfeonline.org.uk/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Jodi Gunning

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UK	Farmers Association	Country Landowners Association	https://www.cla.org.uk/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Jodi Gunning Dorothy Fairburn
UK	Large Farming Estate	Escrick Estate	https://www.escrick.com/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Jodi Gunning
UK	Organisation	Grow Yorkshire	https://www.growyorkshire.co.uk/	Participate in policy workshops	Jodi Gunning
UK	Organisation	LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming)	https://leafuk.org/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Emily Trivett
UK	Union	National Union of Farmers	https://www.nfuonline.com/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Adam Bedford
UK	Organisation	National Trust	https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Jodi Gunning
UK	Organisation	Ouse & Humber Drainage Board	https://www.ohdb.org.uk/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Jodi Gunning
UK	Organisation	Soil Association	https://www.soilassociation.org/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Jodi Gunning
UK	Organisation	Yorkshire Agricultural Society	https://yas.co.uk/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate	Jodi Gunning

				contact to local farmers	
UK	Organisation	Yorkshire Farming and Wildlife Partnership	http://www.farmingandwildlife.net/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Ann Hanson
UK	Organisation	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	https://www.ywt.org.uk/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Jodi Gunning
UK	Organisation	AgLand	https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=NE%2FT000244%2F1	Participate in policy workshops	Jodi Gunning
UK	Organisation	RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds)	https://www.rspb.org.uk/	Participate in policy workshops	Jodi Gunning
UK	Research organisation	ADAS	https://www.adas.uk/	Participate in policy workshops	Jodi Gunning
UK	Research program	Valuing Nature	https://valuing-nature.net/research		
UK	Project	AgLand			
UK	Project	ADVANCES			
UK	Project	Data Science of the Natural Environment	https://gow.epsrc.ukri.org/NGBOViewGrant.aspx?GrantRef=EP/R01860X/1		
RS	Education and Research organisation	Faculty of Sciences	https://www.pmf.uns.ac.rs/en/	Participate in policy workshops; facilitate contact to local farmers	Sanja Brdar

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CZ	Farmers Association	Agricultural Association of the Czech Republic	https://www.zscr.cz/	Participate in policy workshops; interested in results; facilitate contacts to farmers	Borivoj Sarapatka
CZ	Farmers Association	Association of Private Farmers	https://www.asz.cz/	Participate in policy workshops; interested in results; facilitate contacts to farmers	Borivoj Sarapatka

8. Engagement with individual farmers

Main BESTMAP activity that includes farmers in the process of empirical data collection. Approximately 50-70 semi-structured face-to-face interviews based on common guidelines and questionnaires will be conducted in each CS. All data gathered during face-to-face interviews will be stored and processed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and following ethical approvals procedures in the relevant partners.

Each Case Study will select farmers in their country in order to collect data and to disseminate project purpose, farmers' benefits and results. Potential farmers for interview in the case study regions will be identified through the LPIS/AgroSense (for Serbia) data (in CSs where the contact information is included); through local administrations / offices / trusts / societies; farmers associations; land registry and from previous interviewees. When contacting farmers it should be emphasised the ethos of BESTMAP to include "farmers' voice " in policy analysis and go beyond pure economic decisions.

Engagement with individual farmers will be facilitated on CS level, by CS leaders, in communication with relevant Work Package leaders.

As part of BESTMAP's ongoing efforts, the Rural Investment Support for Europe Foundation (RISE), a consortium member, conducted 12 interviews with local stakeholders, situated in Brussels. Stakeholders included producer representatives, input industry professionals, environmental NGOs focusing on European agricultural policy, and expert analysts from think tanks.Their feedback showed support for four key objectives for the future policy development of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP):

- A fairer distribution of value in the food chain;

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- Moving away from direct payments and income support to public funds for public goods;
- Less policy uncertainty and better understanding and consideration of trade-offs,especially with regard to land use;
- Policy that considers the food system as a whole.

The point of these interviews was for BESTMAP to understand what farmers across Europe are in need of. Based on the information gathered at the interviews, the project team formulated a set of policy recommendations, in an effort to influence informed policy and decision-making.

Furthermore, enhancing the engagement of individual farmers, the BESTMAP team performed an online survey, between February and March 2022, designed as a discrete choice experiment. The study was given to farmers in the project's five case studies: the UK, Germany, Spain, the Czech Republic and Serbia. The exploratory character of the poll aimed to explore new facets of BESTMAP's research subject and examine how farmers decide whether or not to implement agri-environmental programs. The questionnaire's results were utilised as input to inform agent-based models (ABMs) about relevant elements to be incorporated into the model structure later that year. Between March and April 2022, BESTMAP's five case studies conducted co-design workshops with regional and national stakeholders. The goal of these talks was to discuss how BESTMAP's modelling results can best support policy decisions and how the interactive dashboard the project is working on can help use the BESTMAP-derived findings.

Understanding farmers' behaviour and their different responses to environmental change, institutional change and policy interventions is important to facilitate the understanding of the drivers of environmental degradation. Therein, the BESTMAP team published the paper "Typologies of European farmers: approaches, methods and research gaps", which was a results of an investigation of the underlying methodologies for determining the types, the purposes of developing typologies and whether there are recurring farmer types across contexts and locations. As a result of the conducted research and evaluated existing data, the BESTMAP members recommend in the paper a stronger embedding of new typologies in the existing literature and improvements in the transparency of reporting of methods and data to increase the potential for comparison, transferability of findings. Suggestions for future research and for policy and legitimacy issues, are also showcased in the article.

The second paper - Adoption and potential of agri-environmental schemes in Europe: Cross-regional evidence from interviews with farmers, explores the notion that Agri-Environmental Schemes (AES) serve as a tool to mitigate the environmental impact of agriculture with a special focus on Europe. This research takes a holistic approach, transforming conventional case studies and structured surveys to provide a comprehensive view that encompasses diverse regions and cultures. Based on the research, BESTMAP members conclude that a consistent driver for AES adoption across regions is the delicate balance of opportunity costs and payment levels. However, they explain that this pattern might be the cause of negative ecological repercussions.

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9. Engagement with national institutions

In the first stage of the project, mapping of relevant government institutions was done by Case Study leaders. Preliminary list of the relevant institutions that will be involved in workshops, contacted when the CS leader needs some inputs about farmers or other organisations, etc. Each case study will conduct a periodical report on the involvement of local or national institutions on CS activities.

Country	**Form of organisation**	**Name of organisation**	**Website**	**Engagement activities**	**Contact person**
CZ	Government Department	Ministry of Agriculture	http://eagri.cz/	Participate in policy workshops; provide data such as LPIS; use and disseminate project results	Borivoj Sarapatka
CZ	Government Department	Ministry of Environment	https://www.mzp.cz/	Participate in policy workshops; use and disseminate project results	Tomas Vaclavik
CZ	Government Department	Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection	http://www.ochranaprirody.cz/	Participate in policy workshops; interested in results	Tomas Vaclavik
CZ	Public Institution	Agrarian Chamber	http://www.akcr.cz/	Participate in policy workshops; use and disseminate project results	Borivoj Sarapatka
DE	Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Climate, Environment and Agriculture	Sächsisches Staatsministerium für Energie, Klimaschutz, Umwelt und Landwirtschaft	https://www.smekul.sachsen.de/	Participate in policy workshops; provide data such as LPIS	Anna Cord
DE	Federal Environmental Office	Landesamt für Umwelt, Landwirtschaft und Geologie	https://www.lfulg.sachsen.de/	Participate in policy workshops; promote farmers' engagement in interviews	Anne Paulus

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				through farmer magazine	
ES	Public administration	DARP-Departament d'Agricultura Ramaderia i Pesca	http://agricultura.gencat.cat/en/inici/index.html	Project partner, case study lead, participate in workshop, provide data, facilitate contacts with farmers	Andres Fernandez
ES	Public administration	Consell General de Cambres Oficials de Comerç, Indústria i Navegació de Catalunya	http://empresa.gencat.cat/ca/treb_ambits_actuacio/comerc/intern/cambres/	Participate in policy workshops as member of FEDER program follow up	Andres Fernandez
ES	Public administration	Departament d'Economia i Coneixement	http://economia.gencat.cat/ca/inici	Participate in policy workshops as member of FEDER program follow up	Andres Fernandez
UK	Government Department	DEFRA (Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs)	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs	Participate in policy workshops	JodiGunning
UK	Government Department	Natural England	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england	Participate in policy workshops	Jodi Gunning
UK	Government Department	Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency	Participate in policy workshops	Jodi Gunning
UK	Government Department	Forestry Commission	https://www.gov.uk/g	Participate in policy	Jodi Gunning

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			overnment/organisations/forestry-commission	workshops	
UK	Advisor to Government	JNCC	https://jncc.gov.uk/	Participate in policy workshops	Jodi Gunning
RS	Government Department	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/	Participate in policy workshops	Sanja Brdar
RS	Government Department	Provincial Secretariat for Agriculture	http://www.psp.vojvodina.gov.rs	Participate in policy workshops	Sanja Brdar
RS	Public Institution	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Vojvodina	https://www.pkv.rs/en/	Contact point for Agricultural Association	Sanja Brdar
RS	Public Institution	Institute for Nature Conservation of Voivodina Province	http://www.pzzp.rs/rs/en/	Participate in policy workshops	Sanja Brdar
RS	Public Institution	The Serbian Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	http://www.sepa.gov.rs/	Participate in policy workshops, interested in results	Sanja Brdar

10. The list of the Engagement activities in CS areas

Engagement processes with relevant actors on national and EU level had started in the early stage of BESTMAP project implementation. The list of events and activities through which BESTMAP project partners are building the links with relevant local and national stakeholders is presented below and it will be regularly updated throughout the project. The official update will be presented in the MS14 Plan of Engagement (Update 2), while the final list of engagement activities and the explanation of the engagement results will be presented in the deliverable D6.2 “Report on engagement with relevant projects and initiatives”

Country	**Target group**	**Name of**	**Partner(s)**	**Engagement activities**

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		organisation	**involved**	
UK	Policy makers	DEFRA	LEEDS	participation in workshop on land use and ESS models, in February in 2020
UK	Policy makers	DEFRA, SEFA	LEEDS	participation in workshop to discuss AES and private sector (DEFRA workshop on land use change and ESS modelling in UK) in March 2020 in Edinburgh
UK	Policy makers	DEFRA	LEEDS	Online meeting with DEFRA to introduce BESTMAP project in May 2020
DE	Policy makers	SMEKUL	UFZ	Online discussion and exchange of farmer interviews in Saxony in April 2020
DE	Policy makers	LfULG (Landesamt für Umwelt, Landwirtschaft und Geologie)	TUD	Presentation of the BESTMAP project and discussion on available data for biodiversity modelling and data exchange with the Saxon State Office for Environment, Agriculture and Geology in August 2020, Freiberg, Saxony
DE	Policy makers	Saxon State Ministry for Energy, Climate Protection, Environment and Agriculture (SMUL)	TUD	Email to state agency (data provider) about progress in BESTMAP, december 2020
DE	Policy makers	Saxon State Ministry for Energy, Climate Protection, Environment and Agriculture (SMUL)	TUD, UFZ	Online meeting with Saxon State Ministry for Energy, Climate Protection, Environment and Agriculture (SMEKUL), in March 2020
DE	Policy makers	LfULG Saxony	TUD, UFZ	Online meeting with LfULG members for discussing options to use outcomes of a previous interview campaign they conducted (LfULG Saxony),

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				April 2020
RS	Policy makers	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	BIOS	Discussion on on organic production in Serbia
RS	Policy makers	Serbian Environmental Protection Agency	BIOS	E-mail correspondence regarding water quality data
RS	Policy makers	Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province, Department for species conservation	BIOS	Bilateral meeting—Discussion on the most important AES for the Bačka region (Serbia case study)
RS	Scientific Community	Faculty of sciences, University of Novi Sad	BIOS	Discussion on availability of biodiversity data and modelling
DE	Scientific Community	Thuenen Institute	TUD	Online presentation of BESTMAP project to Thuenen Institute members in December 2020
ES	Scientific Community	IRTA	CREAF	Online meeting on potential synergies and future collaboration on BESTMAP project, in November 2020
UK	Scientific Community	CONSOLE project partners and stakeholders	LEEDS	Presentation at CONSOLE project meeting in March 2020
CZ	Scientific Community	Archetype Analysis community, Global Land Programme	UPOL	Session on Farming System Archetypes - a typology of farmers for modelling impacts of agricultural policies in the BESTMAP project organised at the Archetype Workshop in Sustainability Research in October 2019, Olomouc

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CZ	Farming community	Agricultural Association; Association of Private Farmers	UPOL	Individual informal meetings with members of the two main farmer associations in the Czech Republic; Aug-Oct 2020
UK	Farming community	Yorkshire Agricultural Society	LEEDS	Meeting with Yorkshire Agricultural Society (YAS) in december 2019
UK	Organisation	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	LEEDS	Online meeting with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, january 2020
UK	Organisation, Farming community	Soil Association	LEEDS	Online meeting with Soil Association in December 2019
UK	Farming community	National Farmers Union (NFU)	LEEDS	Online meeting with National Farmers Union (NFU) in February 2020
UK	Farming community	LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming)	LEEDS	Online meeting with Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) in December 2019
UK	Farmers Association	Country Landowners Association	LEEDS	Online meeting with Country Landowners Association (CLA) in January, 2020
ES	Farming community	Catalan local associations	CREAF	Meeting at DARP with Catalan local associations representatives in January 2020, Barcelona
DE	Farming community	Local farmers and communities	UFZ	farmers' information meeting in North-Western Saxony
CZ	Scientific community	Archetype Analysis community, Global Land Programme	UPOL	Session on Farming System Archetypes organized at the Archetype Workshop in Sustainability Research
UK	Policy makers	DEFRA, SEFA	LEEDS	workshop to discuss AES and private sector
UK	Policy makers	DEFRA	LEEDS	workshop on land use and ESS models
ES	Farmers	Local farming communities	CREAF	F2F meeting at DARP with Catalan local associations representatives

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DE	Policy makers	SMEKUL	UFZ	Discussion and exchange of farmer interviews in Saxony
DE	Policy makers	LfULG (Landesamt für Umwelt, Landwirtschaft und Geologie)	TUD	Discussion on data exchange with the Saxonian State Office for Environment, Agriculture and Geology
ES	Scientific community	ITRA	CREAF	CREAF-IRTA meeting
DE	Policy makers	SMEKUL	TUD/UFZ	Annual BESTMAP update for local partners
RS	Policy makers	Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province, Department for species conservation	BIOS	Discussion on the most important AES for the Bačka region (Serbia case study)
RS	Policy makers	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Government of Serbia	BIOS	Discussion on on organic production in Serbia
RS	Scientific community	Faculty of sciences, University of Novi Sad	BIOS	Discussion on availability of biodiversity data and modelling

As a result of the ongoing and active activities on local level at each of the five Case Study areas, the project was able to compile a list of policy recommendations for each CS. These materials are considered a valuable output for BESTMAP, as they show the active engagement of the project to deliver policy-relevant contributions for the enhancement of the EU agricultural policy-making.

Furthermore, to better inform and engage local authorities and stakeholders within the respective CS area, the project conducted video interviews with the BESTMAP CS leaders. As the interviews were done in the respective local language, this enhanced the

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engagement of regional stakeholders, providing them with targeted and area-specific information. These videos are available on the BESTMAP website, YouTube channel and have been distributed amongst the project consortium to further share with their local networks.

11. Engagement with ABM Modelling Community

Engagement with the ABM community will be achieved by establishing an online presence in order to disseminate BESTMAP outputs. OpenBESTMAP username will be created as an official account representing BESTMAP project on topic-relevant internet platforms such as:

ModelingCommons (blog.modelingcommons.org)
CoMSES Net (www.comses.net)
European Social Simulation Association (http://www.essa.eu.org/)
Integrated Assessment Modelling Consortium (http://www.globalchange.umd.edu/iamc/)

A code for each CS agent-based model is publicly accessible on GitLab https://git.ufz.de/bestmap/bestmap-abm (see deliverable D4.1). By publishing on GitLab, the code is made available to the ABM community, which can benefit from it in the context of open science. Sharing knowledge and in particular code is especially important to advance the still relatively new field of modelling farmer decision-making. Moreover, models were presented in one of the main annual events for the social simulation community - the European Social Simulation Conference 2022.

Supporting the engagement with ABM Modelling Community, the BESTMAP team, along with members from the other AGRIMODELS Cluster project (MINDSTEP and AGRICORE), organised a joint one-day workshop. The event took place in May, 2022 in Basel, Switzerland and was focused on discussing the linkage of agent-based models (ABM) with computational general equilibrium (CGE) or partial equilibrium (PE) models.

Moreover, currently BESTMAP consortium members are working in a close collaboration with representatives from the ABM Modelling Community to design a COMSES net model library. The respective outcome is under development.

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