



INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION TOOLS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	FULL TITLE
CDE	Communication, Dissemination, Exploitation
EU	European Union
JTC	Joint Transnational Call
PCT	Partnership Coordination Team
R&I	Research and Innovation
SRIA	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda
UN	United Nations
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
Water4All	European Partnership on Water Security for the Planet
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Water4All partners mentioned in the report:

ANR	French National Research Agency (France)
BRGM	French geological survey (France)
CREA	CREA Hydro&Energy cluster (Czech Republic)
FORMAS	Swedish Research Council (Sweden)
ISPRA	Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (Italy)
LIS-WATER	Lisbon International Centre for Water (Portugal)
PTEA	Spanish Water Technology Platform (Spain)
UEvora	University of Evora (Portugal)
VITO	Flemish Institute for Technological Research (Belgium)
VMM	Flanders Environment Agency (Belgium)
Water Europe	Water Europe – Technology and Innovation network
Wetsus	European centre of excellence for sustainable water technology (Netherlands)
WRC	Water Research Commission (South Africa)

ABSTRACT

The Water4All Partnership is a Research and Innovation programme for scientific research in freshwater. Co-funded by the European Commission under the framework of Horizon Europe, it aims at tackling water challenges and at enabling water security for all. Water4All will boost systemic transformations and foster the matchmaking between problem owners and solution providers. Launched in June 2022, Water4All will last seven years although some activities will extend till 2032. The Partnership brings together a wide and cohesive group of 90 partners from 33 countries in the European Union and beyond.

As part of Pillar A activities, Task A.3 is in charge of the set-up and evaluation of communication, dissemination and exploitation tools of Water4All. This is a key activity that ensures the full visibility of the programme and the uptake of results by water research and innovation teams, policy-makers and the market. Prior to the official launch of Water4All, partners established the visual identity of the programme to set up the graphic design of communication tools. This was followed by the development and implementation of a wide range of communication tools ranging from the website, a newsletter and the post of messages on social networks, notably LinkedIn and X. Led by the French National Research Agency (ANR), Task A.3 partners have actively engaged in the development of communication tools and keep on working dynamically for their continuous improvement.

This report contains a thorough description of the tools already implemented by the Water4All Partnership as well as an initial assessment of such tools. The ultimate objective of this initial assessment is to draw key lessons and recommendations that should be considered in the future for improving existing tools and/ or identify the need for new ones. It should be noted that the assessment is based on the list of indicators exposed in the Water4All's Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation (CDE) Plan published in November 2022 and to be updated during the second phase of Water4All.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF WATER4ALL COMMUNICATION TOOLS

1. Background information on the Water4All programme and Task A.3

Launched in June 2022, the Water4All Partnership – Water Security for the Planet¹ – co-funded by the European Union (EU) within the frame of the Horizon Europe programme, aims at enabling water security for all in the long term through boosting systemic transformations and changes across the entire research – water innovation pipeline, fostering the matchmaking between problem owners and solution providers. Water4All adopts a systemic approach from source to sea perspective allowing the full recognition of the interconnectedness of upstream and downstream water resources as well as the promotion of integrated and sustainable management practices.

Specific objectives of Water4All are:

- Provision of knowledge, methodologies and tools for water management and planning.
- Demonstration and implementation of innovative solutions for the conservation, restoration, regeneration and best use of water resources.
- Support to European and international policies, strategies and frameworks related to water.
- Improved collaboration in Research and Innovation (R&I) activities.
- Enhanced open access to water knowledge.

As of June 2024, Water4All will gather more than 90 partners from Europe and beyond, and representing the whole R&I chain, including national research funders, research performing organisations, associations, and clusters. Water4All is a programme open to the world, which is reflected by the presence of partners from ten non-EU countries (Brazil, Georgia, Israel, Moldova, Norway, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, Tunisia and the United Kingdom).

Running for seven years, although some actions will extend till 2032, the programme will support a wide portfolio of multi-national and cross-sectoral activities, from physical and biological sciences to human and social sciences. All these activities have been grouped into different categories, leading to the structuring of Water4All into six different Work Packages or Pillars:

- Pillar 0, responsible for the overall management and coordination of the programme.
- Pillar A, whose aim is to define Water4All's strategic orientations and establish communication, dissemination and exploitation tools.
- Pillar B, seeking to generate knowledge through the pooling of financial resources from funding agencies participating in the programme.
- Pillar C, which promotes the uptake of results from research and innovation activities through science-policy interface actions and capacity building.
- Pillar D, whose remit is to support demonstration activities and enhance access to the market of R&I solutions.
- Pillar E, dedicated to increasing the international portfolio of Water4All's activities.

¹ Water4All Partnership – Water Security for the Planet - website: <https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/>

Pillar A includes three Tasks, one of which (Task A.3) is devoted to raising awareness about Partnership outputs. The sub-Task A.3.1 is dedicated to the implementation and evaluation of communication, dissemination and exploitation tools. The Task is led by ANR but it counts with the active support of other partners (CREA, FORMAS, ISPRA, LIS-WATER, PTEA, UEvora, Water Europe, Wetsus, WRC). Task A.3 plays a key role in raising awareness about Water4All aims and activities, providing user-friendly knowledge to citizens, the water R&I community and policy-makers. The dissemination and later exploitation of outputs will contribute to the creation of cooperative science and policy interfacing networks, thereby feeding the activities undertaken within Pillar C.

2. Communication, dissemination and exploitation plan

The Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Plan² (CDE Plan) sets out specific communication and dissemination objectives for Water4All, tools, key messages and target audiences in order to make of Water4All a programme that enables cutting-edge research and innovation whilst supporting European policies and international policy frameworks such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the EU Green Deal or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). The document also offers a list of indicators for measuring the performance of CDE activities.

This plan makes use of the communication and dissemination experience accumulated by another Partnership, the Water JPI³ (Joint Programming Initiative on 'Water Challenges for a Changing World), over its more than ten years of experience (websites, e-newsletters, social and professional networks, webinars, database catering for Open Access / Open Data, press releases, alignment and synergies with other initiatives, etc.).

The CDE Plan for Water4All is a "living document" and shall be revisited and updated throughout Water4All lifetime to adapt to emerging needs, activities and tools. It should be noted that the CDE Plan released in November 2022 mainly focus on communication and dissemination; exploitation activities will be thoroughly outlined in future versions of the CDE Plan, coinciding with the generation of the preliminary results the first Joint Transnational Call (JTC).

For the sake of clarity, communication, dissemination and exploitation are defined as follows:

- **Communication:** It is a strategically planned process that starts at the outset of the programme and will continue thorough, aimed at promoting the activities and results of Water4All. Communication targets a multitude of audiences, including the media and the public.
- **Dissemination:** It is defined as the public disclosure of the results by any appropriate means (other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results).
- **Exploitation:** It refers to the utilisation of results in further research activities other than those covered by the Water4All programme, or in developing, creating and marketing a product or process, or in creating and providing a service, or in standardisation activities.

3. Description of communication and dissemination materials produced by Water4All partners

Partnership members have actively engaged in the development of both external and internal communication and dissemination materials for the partners, but also stakeholders, scientific community, policy-makers and citizens. This chapter offers a brief description of each of these materials, including an access link if relevant.

² Water4All Plan for Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation (CDE), November 2022 - https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/sites/www.water4all-partnership.eu/files/2023-06/Water4All_D1.2_PCDE_20221130.pdf

³ Water JPI - website: <http://www.waterjpi.eu/>

A. Printable and digital material

The external material developed so far is also used to a certain extent for internal purposes. This material is the base for accurate communication and dissemination development outside of the programme consortium. Some elements are made to run during the whole life of the Partnership (e.g., the logo, website, and video presentation) although they may be reviewed at a later stage if deemed necessary by Water4All partners.

A.1. Visual identity/ brand manual.

The visual identify corresponds to the elements used to represent the Water4All Partnership (e.g., logo, typography, colours, pictograms, pictures, etc.). Partners started working on the visual identify well before the official launch of Water4All to be able to support the presentation of the programme to external partners. A “brand manual” document has also been developed to explain how the Water4All’s visual identify must be utilised by partners.

A.2. Printable and digital documents.

The Partnership prints as few documents as possible and gives priority to digital ones. However, the documents listed above are printed upon partners’ request on the occasion of international conferences or national seminars. The following documents have been produced:

- **SRIA (Strategic Research & Innovation agenda) document.** Regarded as the "backbone" of the Water4All Partnership, the SRIA establishes the strategic directives of the programme. This is a complete document (about 50 pages) with a specific graphism for a deep understanding of water knowledge gaps formulated as “water research and innovation topics”. Published in September 2022, the Water4All SRIA 2022-2025⁴ is available online.

A 4-page summary document of the SRIA for broader dissemination to stakeholders, policy-makers and citizens is available both online (<https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/library>) and in a printable version.

- **Leaflet**, outlining general information on the Water4All programme. The contents of the leaflet have been reviewed at the beginning of 2024 and it has been translated into French and Portuguese. A translation in Spanish will be soon available. The Water4All’s leaflet is available in a printable and digital version: <https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/publication/partnership-leaflet>. Translated versions of the leaflet will be soon available on the website.
- **Printed Business cards** (for the Partnership Coordination Team, Chair, Vice-Chairs and CEO) for meetings, exchanges, etc.
- **Roll-ups and posters** for international events (e.g., World Water Forum in Bali, International conferences in Portugal, Finland, etc.).
- **Booklet** for research projects funded as part of the 2022 JTC. The main objectives are to introduce the call topics and to present an abstract of each funded project.

A printed version of booklet was given to participants during the kick-off meeting of the projects in Madrid (April 2024) and a digital version is available online⁵.



⁴ Water4All Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA): 2022-2025 - https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/sites/www.water4all-partnership.eu/files/2023-02/Water4All_SRIA-2022-2025_A4_2311_bd.pdf

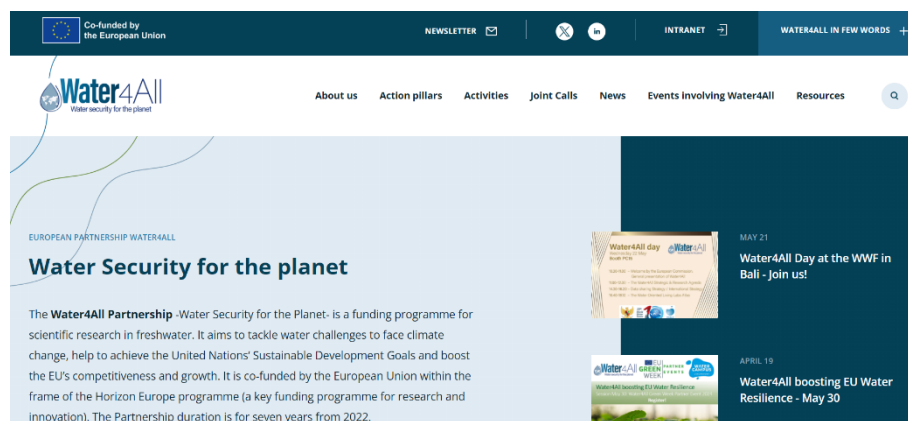
⁵ 2022 Joint Transnational Call Booklet of funded research projects, April 2024 - https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/sites/www.water4all-partnership.eu/files/2024-04/booklet_JTC_2022_W4A_17april24_BR.pdf

A.3. Digital tools.

- **Website.** It is one of the central tools to communicate and disseminate activities and explain the role of the Partnership. It is the focal point that gathers all the information needed for activities such as calls, and additional activities and where digital documents, general information, and news are available.

The development of the website structure and its contents took some months after the official launch of the Partnership. During that period, a sole page was launched to communicate about the Partnership on the internet using the web address of Water4All. The Water JPI website also relayed the main information about the Partnership and its activities during this period.

At the time of writing this report, the communication team is working on the completion of some pages and the update of some information, in particular as regards the SRIA, for which a revised version must be submitted at the end of 2025.



- **Newsletter.** The Water4All’s newsletter is a tool that allows sharing relevant and valuable information on activities with a network of subscribers. The first newsletter was published in February 2023 and it was released on a monthly basis till the end of 2023. Since the beginning of 2024, the newsletter is put out on a bimonthly basis. This change emanates from the decision taken by the Communication Board⁶ of Water4All to modify the scope of the newsletter. Whereas previous newsletters provided general information on the Partnership and other relevant water related programmes, new editions focus on Water4All’s activities and partners. ISPRA takes care of soliciting information on the activities of the different Pillars. This information is then included in the newsletter if the Communication Board agrees to do so. Other news on water research and policy are included on the website in order to offer to the public an overview of emerging water issues with a scientific and/ or political relevance.

The newsletter contains the following sections: Water4All activities (brief description of running activities within each one of the Pillars) and Water4All network (activities particularly aiming to reinforce collaboration with strategic partners), and events. Members of the Water4All network that have subscribed to the newsletter receive the document by email. Nevertheless, the newsletter is also available on the website: <https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/newsletters>

Complementary to the newsletter published on a bimonthly basis, “dedicated newsletters” (flash news) are produced in order to enhance visibility of a particular event or activity (e.g., UN Water Conference in March 2023, Opening of a Joint Transnational Call, etc.).

- **Videos.** A three-minute video has been recently developed on the occasion of the 10th World Water Forum in May 2024 (further information below). The video emphasises the value of water and offers detailed

⁶ The Communication Board brings together some of Water4All partners: ANR, FORMAS, ISPRA, PTEA, VMM, WETSUS. Its role is to review the articles that will be included in the newsletter as well as in the social media. The Communication Board meets 2-3 weeks prior to the publication of the newsletter.

information on the role of Water4All in securing water for all. The video has been conceived to reach out to a large audience and spread information on the need for scientific research to tackle water challenges for humanity activities, biodiversity and life quality in general.

- **Social Media.** Water4All has created a LinkedIn⁷ and X (ex-Twitter)⁸ account to widely communicate on running activities. To better organise the messages to be get through the social networks, the communication team has subscribed to a tool called “Swello”. Last but not least, Water4All has a “YouTube” channel⁹. The videos included in the channel are of particular interest for call applicants to the JTCs as they can find introductory webinars on the calls for proposals.

B. Participation in external events

Water4All participates in many gatherings, international events, workshops or presentations. This section focuses on some examples of Water4All’s involvement in main international events to communicate and disseminate at an international scale. These events allow Water4All to be known as one of the main European programmes in the scientific water research field. It is a way to promote the Partnership and its whole range of activities. Reaching out to policy-makers, the industrial sector for innovative solutions and citizens is part of the communication and dissemination tasks. Amongst all the events Water4All has participated, the following ones are highlighted because of their political and/ or scientific relevance at the EU or international level.

- **United Nations (UN) 2023 Water Conference - New York, March 2023.** This UN Conference is an essential gathering for all actors working on water related themes. Water4All was present in four side events. This special moment allowed communication and information on the actions done or in progress to tackle water challenges. A unique moment to focus on scientific research benefits to manage current and emerging water challenges. Science is necessary to explain mechanisms and find solutions to existing problems and future ones as water is necessary for all human activities and nature at large.
- **IFAT – Munich, May 2024.** Water4All organised a session during the fair. This main international gathering is focused on the water industry. IFAT is the world’s leading trade fair for water. An opportunity for the Water4All Partnership to be in direct contact with industrial stakeholders, to have an overview of industrial needs or opportunities, and to create collaborations and networking for tomorrow's innovative solutions. A promotion place for scientific research needs and partnership activities to mitigate water challenges.
- **World Water Forum – Bali, May 2024.** The World Water Forum is one of the largest gathering of water-related multi-stakeholder events. Focusing on the theme of “Water for shared prosperity”, Water4All attended the event by co-chairing two thematic sessions on “knowledge and innovation”, co-hosting a discussion panel, and showcasing activities in a dedicated booth of 37 m². Participating with partners to side events, and organising a Water4All day with the EU on its booth constituted a major communication opportunity that provided great visibility to the partnership.

VITO keeps an up-to-date document where all upcoming participations to international events are listed. It should be noted that this type of file does not exist for events taking place in Europe unless there is a clear link with the Water4All’s international cooperation strategy.

⁷ Water4All - Partnership | LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/water4all-partnership/>

⁸ Water4All - Partnership | X @Water4AllEU - <https://x.com/Water4AllEU>

⁹ Water4All - Partnership | YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/@Water4AllPartnership>

C. Internal communication

In addition to the set-up of tools for external communication, the Partnership Coordination Team (PCT) has implemented tools for facilitating communication within the consortium. Internal communication is particularly relevant in a programme like Water4All, that gathers almost 90 partners from different types of organisations (funding agencies, ministries, research performing organisations, associations, etc.).

Following proposals from the Governing Board in November 2023, an internal communication document is also developed under the responsibility of the PCT. Produced in a Word format, the objective of this document is to provide information on running and planned activities. It is released on a quarterly basis.

In addition, the PCT has created a platform for the sharing of information, including all administrative and work documents (Grant Agreement, Consortium Agreement, work plans, deliverables, templates, meeting minutes, agendas and presentations, etc.). The platform, based on MS TEAMS, has been facilitated by BRGM – partner of Water4All.

A number of templates have been produced for both internal and external reporting and communication, including a Water4All official presentation that will be soon available on the website. Finally, the PCT has worked on a “Who is Who” directory. The aim of this directory is to provide information on the people involved in Water4All, their role in the different Pillars, and contact details.

4. Assessment of communication tools

On the basis of the indicators set up in the CDE Plan, an initial assessment has been made and covers a one-year period from June 2023 to May 2024. The results are presented in the table below:

Communication tools		Number visitors, subscribers, clicks or views (global or specific pages)	Time sessions (web, pages)	Number docs, data/downloads	Number updates	User countries (+ to -)	Number of print-outs, views (retweet, like, comment)	Number followers/subscribers / views / attendees	Number of info /articles /docs on a subject	Number events held / participations
Digital communication	Website Water4All	71,200 visitors/ year 126,000 unique pageviews	2min 26s	16,871 (one year)	At least, one a week so, on average 60 updates/ year	Italy, France, Spain, Brazil, UK, Finland, Portugal, Netherlands, US			109 News edited (since website opening)	
	E-newsletter (including dedicated editions)	Total clicks average: 974 (most clicked e-newsletter: 1,531)				TBD*		533	10 e-newsletters & 101 articles & 6 dedicated editions (flash news)	
	Press releases								At least, 2	
Social media	X (ex-Twitter)	42,000 impressions (one year)					610 (one year)	412	59 posts (one year)	
	LinkedIn	46,700 impressions (one year)				Belgium, France, Netherlands, Finland, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, Italy	3,030 (one year)	1367	34 posts (one year)	
	YouTube Podcasts							TBD*	2	
Events	Meetings, workshops							TBD*	TBD*	TBD*
	International webinars							On average 300 views	TBD*	2
Printable & digital docs	Leaflets, flyers, booklets								4 different documents	
	Policy briefs									
	Posters /Roll-ups								8 printed elements	
Classic media (Press / Radio)	Press releases								At least, 1	
	Articles									
	Interviews									

* The abbreviation "TBD" means To Be Done

Social media includes analytics which are relevant for a general overview of trends. It gives feedback on subjects that interest followers and people interested in broader water-related subjects addressed by Water4All. This preliminary analysis shows:

- X / ex-Twitter: Joint calls themes are the most popular as they gather more views, retweets and comments (e.g., Post on 12th September 2023 for the launch of the 2023 JTC, with almost 6,000 views).
- LinkedIn is the most popular social media for Water4All. The number of followers is constantly growing. Joint calls themes are also the most popular (e.g., Post on 12th September 2023 on the 2023 JTC: 3,813 views).

5. Conclusions and next steps

Communication is an essential activity for the success of Water4All. It is through communication that partners can inform stakeholders and society at large of the progress made in the different activities. Communication plays a role as well in attracting new partners by offering a good understanding of future tasks and expected impacts. In this context, Water4All partners have made important efforts in the set-up of communication tools both externally and internally (within the consortium). The website is fully operational, the newsletter is sent on a bimonthly basis and short messages/ articles are frequently made available through social networks. Furthermore, the first booklet of funded projects has been published online and largely disseminated during the kick-off meeting in Madrid (April 2024). Water4All partners are fully aware of the importance of communication and have actively contributed to the timely implementation of tools.

Even though some pieces of data are missing for some of the indicators, the analysis shows that the results obtained so far are very satisfying regarding the number of Water4All's website viewers, the number of followers on social networks and the number of digital documents produced. However, there is also evidence to assert that improvements are definitely needed in the production of videos and podcasts. Moreover, a more careful design of activities is needed to guarantee the appropriate collection of information. Thus, there is no data on the number of EU-based events Water4All partners have participated in. In the same vein, it is necessary to improve the planning of posts for the social networks as this activity is not sufficiently planned by partners and it is currently being done following the different requests of the Water4All's coordinator or Pillar leaders.

The initial assessment shows that **dissemination and exploitation** are not yet at full speed therefore no emphasis has been made on the dissemination and exploitation of results in this report. This is explained by the fact that no concrete results are available yet but Task A.1.3 will work on this aspect over the next few months in order to guarantee the full consideration of Water4All results by different water research and innovation communities.

With the launch of the second period of Water4All in June 2024, partners will put at the service of the programme best available tools to enable the appropriation and use of Water4All results in water management and planning. To this end, specific dissemination and exploitation tools such as policy briefs and "solution providers – problem owners" platforms will be identified and implemented.

In addition to the launch of dissemination and exploitation tools, and taking into consideration the assessment of the indicators shown in Chapter 4 of this report, the following actions will be taken during the second period:

Action 1. Further update of communication tools, in particular the website and leaflets. The leaflet of the Water4All's SRIA will be updated towards the end of 2025 in order to reflect the changes that will be made as a result of the revision process that is currently taking place. The general Water4All's leaflet will also be updated in order to incorporate new partners or new activities. Translations will be made if needed.

Being a living document, the CDE Plan will also be updated during the second phase of Water4All to better reflect emerging strategic and operational needs of consortium partners and interested parties. Attention will be paid to the list of indicators, which might evolve over time.

Action 2. A survey will be produced and sent to all members of the Water4All Consortium in order to get partners' views regarding existing communication tools, the quality of the visual identity, the quality of contents, areas for improvement and other possible tools to be developed.

Action 3. Development of a file containing detailed information on the participation of Water4All to EU-based conferences (following the model of that existing for international conferences). Indeed, this is an information gap that neither the PCT nor the rest of Task A.3 partners have succeeded to get hold of.

Action 4. The number of subscribers to the Water4All's newsletter is satisfying (over 500). However, latest data indicate that no new subscriptions have taken place during the second quarter of 2024. In order to reverse this situation, it is necessary to give more visibility to the Partnership and the newsletter whilst also paying attention to the quality of the articles published.

Task A.1.3 members will also monitor where newsletter subscribers mainly come from. This is strategic information that will help the PCT identify geographical areas where it is required to further promote the programme.

From a more operational point of view, Mailjet (the email service for sending newsletters) should be upgraded.

Action 5. The number of followers to Water4All's LinkedIn and X accounts is also satisfying. It is particularly positive the fact that the number of LinkedIn followers keeps on increasing (that of X remains relatively stable over time).

Even though Water4All posts information on social networks on a recurrent basis, there is a need to further structure this action. An Excel file has been created by the PCT but a more careful design of the information to be posted (what and when) should be done. The PCT should make sure to involve all partners in the identification of relevant posts for the social networks.

Time constraints have not allowed the development of podcasts. This is an area that Task A.3 wishes to improve in the next stages of the project to be able to post dedicated sessions on activities and thematic priorities of Water4All.

Action 6. In the same vein as with the podcasts, more efforts will be made to produce videos for the Water4All's YouTube channel. Although some videos are already available, more elements should be included in the future in order to exploit the full potential of the channel.

Action 7. Although social networks are being privileged by new generations, classic media continue to offer a suitable channel for the communication of information. In this sense, Task A.3 will explore the possibility to release press releases or articles that can be disseminated through radio or television channels.



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