



ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Recommendations for the future

Deliverable D1.24, July 2026



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Executive summary

This deliverable presents the assessment of the communication tools developed by the Water4All Partnership under Task A.3, which is responsible for the design, implementation, and continuous evaluation of the Partnership's communication strategy.

The [Water4All Partnership — Water Security for the Planet](#) has been established under the European Union's *Horizon Europe* programme as a major research and innovation partnership dedicated to water challenges. Launched in June 2022, the partnership spans **seven years of collaborative action**, bringing together a diverse consortium of research organisations, funding bodies, policy actors, technology developers and water authorities from **over 30 countries in Europe and beyond**. The overarching vision of Water4All is to **enable long-term water security for all**, by fostering *systemic transformations* across the entire research and innovation chain and *matching problem owners with solution providers*. Scientific research, innovation, stakeholder engagement, and cross-sector coordination are all central to this mission.

The evaluation was carried out through an internal survey conducted in June 2026 among members of the Water4All Partnership. The questionnaire collected both quantitative and qualitative feedback on the main communication tools implemented under the Water4All Communication and Dissemination Plan, including the Partnership's website, newsletter, communication frequency, visual identity, and broader communication activities. Twenty responses were received, representing more than two-thirds of the organisations involved in Pillar A. The survey combined closed-ended questions with open-ended comments, enabling both a quantitative assessment of stakeholder satisfaction and a qualitative analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

Overall, the evaluation demonstrates a high level of satisfaction with Water4All's communication framework. Respondents positively assessed the Partnership's website, newsletter, and visual identity, recognising their contribution to strengthening the visibility of Water4All and facilitating communication among partners and external stakeholders. The current frequency of communication activities also appears to meet the expectations of Partnership members, with virtually no requests for significant changes.

While the overall assessment is highly positive, respondents identified several opportunities to further strengthen the Partnership's communication strategy. The most recurrent recommendations include improving the visibility and accessibility of funded projects and their results, making greater use of visual and digital communication formats such as videos, animations, infographics, and impact stories, and adopting more targeted communication tailored to specific stakeholder groups. Respondents also highlighted the importance of strengthening storytelling, increasing the representation of Global South partners across communication channels, reinforcing collaboration with other European and international initiatives, and enhancing the dissemination and policy uptake of research results.

The findings confirm that Water4All has established a robust communication framework that provides a solid basis for supporting the Partnership's objectives. At the same time, they demonstrate that communication should continue to evolve alongside the Partnership, placing greater emphasis on accessibility, impact demonstration, and knowledge uptake. As Water4All prepares to contribute to major international initiatives, including the 2026 UN Water Conference and future World Water Forum activities, the recommendations presented in this deliverable provide timely guidance for further strengthening the Partnership's visibility, outreach, and long-term impact.

Introduction

Task A.3 of the Water4All Partnership is responsible for the design, implementation and evaluation of the programme's communication tools. Water4All has developed a comprehensive set of communication tools targeting a wide range of stakeholders, including researchers, policymakers, funding organisations, practitioners, and the general public. These tools include the official [Water4All website](#), which serves as the central information and knowledge platform for the Partnership; a regular newsletter providing updates on calls, events, projects, and achievements; social media channels used to increase outreach and engagement; a coherent visual identity to ensure consistent branding across communication materials; promotional resources such as brochures, factsheets, videos, and presentations; and dedicated communication activities, including webinars, conferences, workshops, and stakeholder events.

The current research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem is characterised by a wide range of funding programmes operating at both national and European levels. While this diversity creates valuable opportunities, it also makes it increasingly challenging for researchers to identify the funding instrument best suited to their specific research needs. At the same time, it can hinder policymakers and the wider public from gaining a clear understanding of scientific advances and their potential societal impact. In this context, **effective communication is a strategic priority that requires continuous reflection and adaptation to evolving stakeholder needs.**

Communication plays a fundamental role not only in raising awareness of funding opportunities, but also in **ensuring the effective dissemination, exploitation and uptake of R&I results.** A recurring message from end-users is that they often lack a clear overview of the knowledge, innovations and practical outcomes generated by research projects. To address this important barrier, Water4All has developed and implemented a range of dedicated communication tools designed to strengthen the exchange of information between funded research teams and the potential users and beneficiaries of project results.

These communication tools are comprehensively described in the Water4All Communication and Dissemination Plan, published as a dedicated deliverable in November 2024. More specifically, the Plan defines the key communication objectives, target audiences, core messages, communication channels, visual identity guidelines, and monitoring indicators used to assess the effectiveness of communication and dissemination actions. A first assessment of their implementation and performance was conducted approximately one year later, based on the indicators defined in that plan. The findings of this initial evaluation informed the identification of actions to further develop existing tools, improve their effectiveness, and address emerging communication needs. **The present deliverable builds on that initial assessment by providing an updated evaluation of the effectiveness of the Water4All communication strategy and its associated tools.** Drawing on both quantitative and qualitative feedback collected from Partnership members, it identifies key strengths and areas for improvement, and provides recommendations to support the continuous enhancement of the Partnership's communication activities.

The evaluation of the Water4All communication tools comes at a particularly important moment in the Partnership's development. As Water4All enters a new phase of maturity, it is preparing a series of strategic communication and outreach actions to strengthen its international visibility and maximise the impact of its activities and results. In particular, the Partnership is actively preparing to contribute to major international events, including the **UN-Water Conference** in November 2026 and the forthcoming **World Water Forum**. These high-profile events provide valuable opportunities to showcase Water4All's achievements, engage with international stakeholders, and reinforce its role as a key European partnership addressing global water challenges. The findings of this evaluation therefore provide timely evidence to inform the further refinement of the Partnership's communication strategy and ensure that its communication tools are well suited to supporting these important international initiatives.

Methodology

The evaluation presented in this deliverable is based on an internal survey conducted among members of the Water4All Partnership in June 2026, corresponding to the beginning of the third phase of the programme. **The objective of the survey was to gather structured feedback on the effectiveness of the Partnership's communication strategy and the communication tools implemented under Task A.3, while identifying opportunities for further improvement.**

The questionnaire was distributed electronically to representatives of the Water4All partner organisations involved in the Partnership's Pillar A activities. A total **of 20 responses** were received, which represents more than two thirds of the total number of potential respondents from Pillar A. Although the survey was not intended to provide a statistically representative assessment of all Partnership members, it was designed to capture the perspectives and experiences of organisations actively engaged with Water4All's communication activities.

The questionnaire combined closed-ended and open-ended questions to collect both quantitative and qualitative information. **The survey covered the main components of the Partnership's communication framework**, including:

- The Water4All website;
- The Water4All newsletter;
- The frequency and effectiveness of communication activities and information shared with partners;
- The Partnership's visual identity; and
- Opportunities for improvement, through open-ended questions inviting respondents to provide comments, suggestions, and recommendations.

The survey was intentionally designed to be concise in order to encourage participation and minimise the burden on respondents. Recognising that members of the Partnership are involved in numerous activities and regularly invited to contribute to consultations, the questionnaire focused on a limited number of key questions covering the main communication tools and strategic aspects of the Water4All communication framework. This approach aimed to maximise the response rate while still collecting meaningful quantitative and qualitative feedback to support the evaluation of the Partnership's communication activities.

The combined use of quantitative and qualitative data provides a more comprehensive assessment of the Partnership's communication activities. While the quantitative results offer an overview of respondents' levels of satisfaction with the existing communication tools, the qualitative feedback provides additional context and helps explain the underlying reasons for these perceptions. Together, these findings form the basis for the assessment presented in this deliverable and inform the recommendations for the continued improvement of Water4All's communication strategy.

Responses to the closed-ended questions were analysed using descriptive statistics. The qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis, whereby comments were reviewed, grouped according to recurring topics, and synthesised to identify common strengths, concerns, and suggestions expressed by respondents.

The findings presented in this deliverable will be shared and discussed at a forthcoming meeting of the Water4All Executive Board, towards the end of 2026. This discussion will provide an opportunity for Executive Board members to review the evaluation results, contribute additional perspectives based on their experience, and validate the proposed recommendations. The exchange of views will help ensure that the final

recommendations reflect the priorities of the Partnership and support the continuous improvement of Water4All's communication strategy and communication tools.

Survey results

Overall, and as depicted in **Figure I**, the survey demonstrates a high level of satisfaction with the main communication tools developed by the Water4All Partnership, particularly the website, newsletter, and visual identity. The positive ratings suggest that the communication framework established under the Water4All Communication and Dissemination Plan provides a solid foundation for engaging partners and external stakeholders and for enhancing the visibility of the Partnership.

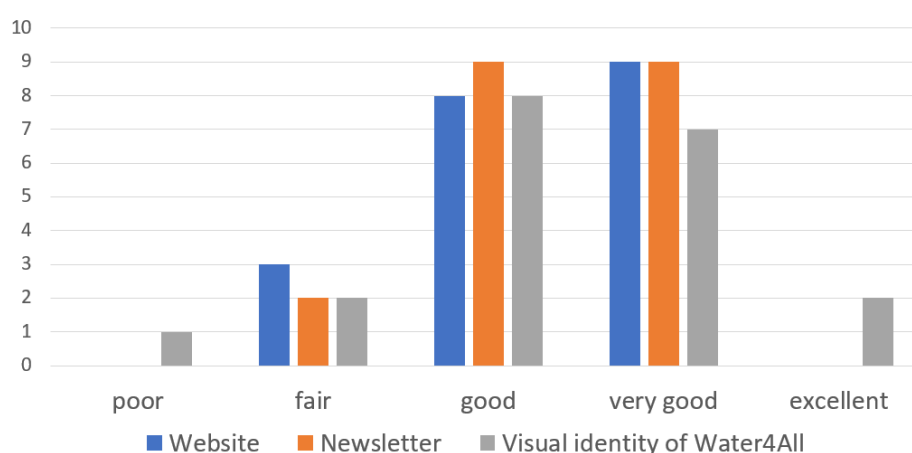


Figure I. Respondents' satisfaction with Water4All's website, newsletter and visual identity.

The following sections provide a detailed analysis of the feedback collected through the survey. **They present the recommendations and specific suggestions made by respondents for each of the questions addressed**, highlighting the main strengths identified, the areas for improvement, and the opportunities for further development of Water4All's communication tools and activities.

Question I. How would you rate the website?

Several respondents highlighted the importance of further **strengthening the international dimension** of the Water4All website by ensuring a more balanced representation of activities and contributions from all regions involved in the Partnership. In particular, one respondent noted that the current content tends to focus more strongly on European activities and news, and suggested encouraging greater contributions from partners in the Global South. Increasing the visibility of Global South partners, their activities, and their perspectives would help better reflect the global ambition of Water4All and reinforce the Partnership's role as an international initiative addressing water security challenges.

A recurring recommendation was to improve the visibility, accessibility, and presentation of Water4All outputs and knowledge resources. While respondents recognise that the website already provides a significant amount of information, they suggested that research results, deliverables, and other outputs could be presented in a more structured and user-friendly way. Suggested improvements include the standardisation of deliverable titles and the creation of more visually appealing cover pages to facilitate

recognition and navigation. Respondents also proposed establishing a dedicated section gathering the main platforms, inventories, and resources developed within or connected to Water4All, such as research infrastructures, observatories, learning materials, data-sharing platforms, educational toolkits, and other knowledge resources. Such a dedicated space would make it easier for users to discover and access the tools available through the Partnership¹.

Question II. How would you rate the newsletter?

The Water4All newsletter was positively perceived by respondents, who recognised its overall quality and its role in keeping Partnership members informed about ongoing activities, developments, and achievements. The feedback indicates that the newsletter provides a clear and effective communication channel for sharing relevant information across the Partnership.

Nevertheless, **respondents also highlighted some areas where further improvements could enhance its representativeness and effectiveness**. One point concerned the need to ensure broader geographical representation, particularly by increasing the visibility of contributions and news from Global South Partners. This would help better reflect the diversity of the Partnership and ensure that communication activities adequately capture perspectives and achievements from all regions involved.

Respondents also noted that the production of **a comprehensive and engaging newsletter relies on the availability of contributions from partners**. While the Communication Board provides an effective mechanism to facilitate the collection of content and encourages partner participation, the number and diversity of inputs received may vary over time. Strengthening engagement from partners and encouraging more regular contributions could therefore support the development of richer and more balanced newsletter content.

Finally, **one respondent raised a technical accessibility issue**, reporting difficulties in opening the newsletter and accessing its visual content. Although the newsletter was generally considered visually appealing, this feedback highlights the importance of ensuring compatibility across different email platforms and devices. Regular technical checks and optimisation of the newsletter format could help prevent accessibility issues and ensure that all recipients can fully access the content.

Question III. Frequency of the newsletter.

The survey included a question on the preferred frequency of communication activities in order to assess whether the current rhythm of information sharing meets the needs of Water4All partners. Only one respondent provided a specific recommendation, suggesting that communication activities should take place three times per year. **Given that no additional comments or requests for increased or reduced frequency were received, this response may indicate that the current communication frequency is considered appropriate by Partnership members.**

Question IV. Assessment of Water4All's visual identity.

The Water4All visual identity was generally perceived positively by respondents, who highlighted its clarity, coherence, and contribution to establishing a professional image for the Partnership. The consistency of the branding across communication materials was recognised as an important asset, helping to strengthen the recognition of Water4All and its activities among target audiences.

¹ At the time of writing this report, Water4All is working on the development of a “repository” entitled “Scientific evidence for action” aimed at gathering main results from the programme.

At the same time, respondents identified opportunities to further enhance the attractiveness and impact of the visual identity by making greater use of modern visual communication approaches. In particular, suggestions included the increased use of infographics, animations, and concise visual summaries to communicate project results and key messages more effectively. Such tools could help make complex research and innovation outcomes more accessible to a wider range of audiences, including policymakers, stakeholders, and potential end-users. One respondent also highlighted the opportunity to further reinforce the Water4All brand identity by strengthening the link between the Partnership's name and its overarching ambition of achieving "Water Security for the Planet". This could contribute to making the brand more memorable and communicating the global relevance of Water4All's mission. In this context, the development of impactful visual materials, such as graphical summaries and thematic publications, was considered a valuable approach.

Question V. Suggestions to improve communication activities.

Beyond the assessment of specific communication tools, respondents provided a number of broader recommendations aimed at strengthening the visibility, accessibility, and impact of Water4All communication activities. Overall, the feedback highlights the need to further refine communication approaches by making **messages more targeted**, increasing the visibility of project outcomes, and adopting more engaging formats to reach different audiences.

A recurring theme was the importance of improving the targeting and specificity of communication content. While Water4All addresses a topic of broad societal relevance, water research encompasses a wide range of themes and communities. Respondents suggested that **communication activities, including webinars and events, should more clearly define their objectives, expected outcomes, and relevance for specific audiences**. Providing more detailed information on the content of activities, such as the projects or results that will be presented, would allow potential participants to better assess the relevance of the event to their interests and increase engagement. **Strengthening storytelling approaches and highlighting concrete examples of societal impact were also identified as important elements for making Water4All achievements more accessible and compelling.**

Respondents also emphasised the need to further increase the visibility of funded projects and their results. Suggestions included providing direct links to project websites, ensuring that basic project information and relevant documents are easily accessible through the Water4All website, and developing a more interactive project database with filtering and mapping functionalities. Such an approach would facilitate access to project information and support the dissemination and uptake of research outcomes by stakeholders beyond the Partnership. Additional communication formats, such as short project videos, one-minute explainer videos, policy briefs, impact stories, and regular project highlights, were identified as effective ways to showcase achievements and demonstrate the added value of Water4All activities.

The importance of strengthening digital communication was also highlighted. Respondents recommended increasing activity on social media platforms and making greater use of dynamic content, such as videos, animations, and infographics, rather than relying primarily on static images. These formats were considered particularly valuable for attracting the attention of new audiences and enabling first-time visitors to quickly understand the objectives, activities, and impact of the Partnership. Consistent messaging across communication channels, supported by stronger storytelling techniques, was also identified as essential to reinforce the Water4All identity and improve recognition.

Several respondents highlighted the potential for increased collaboration and visibility through stronger links with related initiatives, particularly other partnerships and programmes working on environmental challenges. More visible joint activities and coordinated communication efforts could help maximise outreach and demonstrate synergies across the European research and innovation landscape. In addition, **respondents suggested strengthening engagement with policymakers and decision-makers**, including through dedicated

events aimed at presenting the value and achievements of Water4All to high-level European stakeholders and discussing pathways for long-term impact and sustainability.

Finally, **respondents highlighted the importance of supporting the exploitation and uptake of project results, including through stronger links with policy processes and support for scaling-up activities.** Existing initiatives, such as impact webinars showcasing project outcomes, were considered good examples of how research results can be promoted beyond the scientific community. Future Water4All conferences and dissemination activities were also identified as important opportunities to further enhance visibility, demonstrate impact, and strengthen connections between research outcomes, stakeholders, and policy needs.

Conclusions and key recommendations

The evaluation of Water4All's communication strategy and tools demonstrates an overall high level of satisfaction among Partnership members. The survey results confirm that the communication framework established through the Water4All Communication and Dissemination Plan provides a strong basis for supporting information exchange, increasing visibility, and promoting the achievements of the Partnership. In particular, the website, newsletter, and visual identity were positively assessed, highlighting their effectiveness in maintaining communication with partners and supporting the dissemination of Water4All activities.

At the same time, the feedback collected through the survey provides valuable insights into areas where communication activities can be further strengthened. The main messages emerging from respondents relate to the need for more targeted and audience-oriented communication, improved visibility of funded projects and their results, increased use of engaging digital formats, and stronger connections between research outputs, policy needs, and societal impact. Respondents also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the global dimension of Water4All is more visible across communication channels, particularly through greater representation of contributions and achievements from Global South partners.

The evaluation also confirms that communication should continue to evolve throughout the lifetime of the Partnership. While the existing tools provide a solid foundation, further improvements will require moving beyond the dissemination of information towards more strategic communication approaches based on storytelling, accessibility, interaction, and impact demonstration. This includes making research outcomes easier to discover and understand, adapting messages to the needs of different audiences, and promoting stronger engagement with stakeholders beyond the Partnership.

Based on the feedback received, the following key recommendations are proposed:

1. **Strengthen the international dimension and visibility of Water4All communication.** Increase the representation of Global South partners, their activities, and their achievements across the website, newsletter, and other communication channels to better reflect the global ambition of the Partnership.
2. **Improve the accessibility and visibility of Water4All outputs, including funded project and knowledge resources.** Develop a more structured and user-friendly approach for presenting project results, deliverables, tools, platforms, and other knowledge resources, including dedicated sections or repositories that facilitate access for external users. A first mock-up of the repository will become in 2026.
3. **Expand the use of visual and digital communication formats.** Increase the use of engaging formats such as short videos, animations, infographics, visual summaries, and impact stories to make Water4All activities and results more accessible and attractive to wider audiences.

4. **Strengthen storytelling and impact-oriented communication.** Move beyond reporting activities by highlighting concrete examples of societal benefits, success stories, policy relevance, and real-world impacts generated by Water4All projects.
5. **Enhance social media presence and digital outreach.** Increase the frequency and diversity of content shared through social media channels, **with greater emphasis on dynamic formats** such as videos and interactive content to improve visibility and engagement.
6. **Reinforce collaboration and communication synergies with related initiatives.** Develop stronger links with other European and international partnerships and programmes addressing environmental challenges to maximise outreach, increase visibility, and demonstrate complementarities.
7. **Strengthen engagement with policymakers and support research uptake.** Organise targeted communication activities aimed at decision-makers and policy stakeholders, while supporting the translation of research outcomes into policy-relevant formats such as policy briefs, impact summaries, and scaling-up opportunities.
8. **Improve internal mechanisms for collecting and sharing communication content.** Encourage more systematic contributions from partners.

Overall, the evaluation confirms that Water4All has established an effective and recognised communication framework. The implementation of these recommendations would further enhance the Partnership's capacity to communicate its achievements, engage diverse audiences, and maximise the long-term impact and uptake of its research and innovation activities.



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