



### D3.1 CoP Strategic Plan

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## Table of contents

1.	Introduction	6
2.	What is a CoP and its importance?	8
2.1	The CoP Success Wheel	10
2.2	Why form a CoP	11
3.	How to organize a CoP	12
3.1	CoP's Life cycle	12
3.2	CoPs' mission and specific goals	12
3.3	Participants / Organization	13
3.4	Defining criteria for the identification of the participants	14
3.5	Motivation (What motivates the participants in collaborating)	16
3.6	When and how to convene meetings	17
3.7	Designing activities and action plan	18
4.	CoPs in SoilValues	20
4.1	Engaging stakeholders and diversity contexts	20
4.2	Management Body	20
	Facilitator's Role (mandatory)	20
	Coordinator's Role (mandatory)	21
	Monitor's Role (recommended)	21
	Note-Keeper's Role (recommended)	21
4.3	Action Plan and timeline for CoP assembly	21
4.4	Monitoring and Evaluating CoPs	22
4.5	Validation and Scaling-up	23
4.6	Proposed Calendar and materials for CoPs' activities	24
4.7	Dissemination strategy	25
4.8	Sustainability Plan for the CoPs after SoilValues	26
5.	Network Analysis	27
5.1	Preliminary exercise and results	27
6.	Conclusions	30
	Acknowledgements	31
	References	32
	Appendix A: CoP's action plan	33
	Appendix B: Evaluation guidelines for the CoPs	35
	Appendix C: Template to complete the network analysis	36

## List of Tables

Table 1. Criteria for selection of CoP’s participants (adapted from Schwarz et al., 2021).....	15
Table 2. Proposed list of meetings within WP3. ....	25
Table 3. Number of land managers engaged during the setting-up of the TG at the moment of the network analysis exercise. ....	29

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Traits of a Community of Practice.....	8
Figure 2. "The Community Universe" in The Communities of Practice Playbook from EU.....	9
Figure 4. The Communities of Practice success wheel in The Communities of Practice Playbook from EU.....	10
Figure 5. CoP's life cycle .....	12
Figure 6. Layers of stakeholders within each CoP. ....	14
Figure 7. Interaction between Communities and individual learning.....	23
Figure 8. Template used for the Network Analysis based on the i2connect project toolbox.....	27

## Acronyms and abbreviations

CoP	Community of practice
DoA	Description of action
EU	European Union
KPI	Key performance indicator
MS	Milestone
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
RCCI	Resources, capabilities, collaborations & innovations
SES	Soil-based ecosystem services
SHBM	Soil Health Business Models
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely
TG	Testing Ground
UN CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
WP	Work package

## Project consortium

No.	Participant organisation name	Country
1	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven)	BE
2	Eigen Vermogen van het Instituut voor Landbouw- en Visserijonderzoek (EV ILVO)	BE
3	Stichting Wageningen Research (WR)	NL
4	Wageningen University (WU)	NL
5	European Landowners' Organization (ELO)	BE
6	Consultoria Agroindustrial (CONSULAI)	PT
7	Aarhus Universitet (AU)	DK
8	KOIS Invest (KOIS)	BE
9	MR F&A Consult (MFRA)	BE
10	Instytut Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa Polska Akademia Nauk (IrWiR PAN)	PL
11	Thuenen Institut (THUENEN)	DE
12	Udruzenje Eko-Inovacija na Balkanu (ABE)	RS
13	Institute Navarro de Tecnologias e Infraestructuras Agroalimentarias (INTIA)	ES
14	Lietuvos Misko ir Zemes Savininku Asociacija (FOAL)	LT

## Overview of the SoilValues project

SoilValues: Enhancing Soil health through Values-based business models (HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL02-05)

Project duration: 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2026 (48 months)

Total project budget: € 4 999 922.50

EU Grant: € 4 999 922.50

Land managers combine man-made resources with natural resources to produce marketable products like food, feed, fibre, and wood, but at the same time produce ecosystem services that are generally not marketed or compensated. However, land managers generally have little incentive to invest in healthy soils, as they cannot sufficiently capture the value generated by these ecosystem services. SoilValues aims to contribute to the conditions for developing successful soil health business models. These are models in which land managers make production decisions that result in higher levels of soil-based ecosystem services (SES) and in which they are paid for the non-marketed services they generate. In order for such business models to function, three important conditions need to be fulfilled: (1) the outcomes of SES need to be measured, thus requiring knowledge, indicators and models, (2) the data and information generated by these indicators and models need to be exchanged to facilitate monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV), and (3) all these activities should be governed by an appropriate institutional framework consisting of the necessary legislation, standards and incentive schemes. To enhance the conditions for developing successful soil health business models, SoilValues will: (1) provide a comprehensive assessment framework addressing all factors influencing the development of business models for investing in soil health, (2) establish 6 testing grounds across Europe to test and improve emerging and designing new soil health business models, (3) establish 12 communities of practice of land managers, value chain actors, investors and public authorities for soil health business models, (4) design a comprehensive toolbox of incentives and policy recommendations to facilitate soil health business models and (5) raise awareness and exchange knowledge for soil health business models. This work is structured along five distinct work packages (WPs).

## Summary

This deliverable provides a summary of the most relevant materials in the academic and grey literature about the conceptualization, implementation, and governance modules for communities of practice (CoPs). This review of the literature is then contextualized with the objectives laid out in the Description of action (DoA) of SoilValues and presents a detailed plan of activities for the CoPs, including CoP mission, goals, structure, governance model and dissemination strategy. Despite the strategic plan nature of the document, it also includes the preliminary results of a network analysis on the six initial CoPs that will be intrinsically connected to the six Testing Grounds (TGs) in SoilValues.



## 1. Introduction

This document is the first deliverable of SoilValues' work package (WP) 3 'Communities of Practice', and it aims at providing a strategy to establish 12 Communities of Practice (CoPs) based on applied research to the project's main objectives involving the validation and scaling-up of Soil Health Business Models (SHBMs). These CoPs are defined as "groups of people who share a common interest, share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis," as mentioned in more detail in section 2. The CoP has a 'practice' as a basis, i.e., it has a joint enterprise (participants with a common goal), a mutual engagement that allows a constant connection among CoP's members, and a shared repertoire between the members. In this context, the ultimate common interest will be validating and scaling-up SHBMs.

Soil is a key asset to agriculture and forestry production. Soil health, although complex, is essential to farmers/land managers as well as society because it generates ecosystem services such as clean water, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity. Despite the increasing awareness of the importance of generating and maintaining healthy soils, land managers frequently do not have sufficient incentives to invest in soil health. SHBMs are ways in which land managers create and capture value from what a healthy soil provides. Currently, there is still a knowledge gap between available financial mechanisms and how these may enhance the conditions for developing successful SHBMs.

SoilValues will provide an assessment framework addressing the main factors influencing the development of SHBMs to investigate soil health. Within the project, this framework will be used in six testing grounds (TGs) in different countries across Europe to test and improve emerging SHBMs. 12 CoPs will then establish discussions about the validity of the SHBM and how its scalability may be incentivized. There will be 6 initial CoPs directly related to the 6 testing grounds (Portugal, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Germany, and Denmark) plus an additional 6 CoPs that will either be an enlargement of 3 initial CoPs (Belgium, Germany, Netherlands) or 3 new CoPs in other countries (Spain, Lithuania, and Serbia).

If on one hand, the TGs are where the SHBM is tested, on the other hand, the CoP will be where land managers can cooperate and engage in discussions to explore the full potential of the SHBM. Land managers may increase their profitability by benefiting from economies of scale during this cooperation in the CoPs once they exchange expertise and identify common strategies for sales, procurement, and administrative services. The CoP is not restricted to land managers and should also involve value chain actors, investors, and public authorities. This comprehensive approach will provide information fluidity across the SHBM value chain facilitating the understanding of total environmental impact across the chain and not restricting it to what happens solely at the farm level.

All WPs in SoilValues will be required to work closely together given the interdependent nature of the project. The assessment framework produced in WP1 will receive information from the TGs in WP2 and from the CoPs in WP3. Meaning that the CoPs will act as ambassadors for the SHBMs tested in WP2. The CoPs are thus extensions of the TGs that will enable collaborations in both horizontal (farmers/land managers) and vertical (across the value chain) terms. This will make up part of the sustainability strategy for the continuity of agronomic practices and cooperation beyond the boundaries of the project's timeline. Additionally, the CoPs will be informed about the findings in WP4 regarding the available incentives that may serve as inspiration and a starting point for the CoPs' discussion about the avenues to scale up SHBMs. Finally, the communication

and dissemination of CoPs' activities will be key to approach and involve the most relevant actors and keep the discussion relevant for the promotion of soil health practices associated with validated business models.

## 2. What is a CoP and its importance?

A CoP is defined as “groups of people who share a common interest, share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wegner et al., 2002). The growing attention to CoPs within organizations can be attributed to their valuable perspective on explicit and tacit knowledge, learning, and development within a particular field of practice, all of which are fundamental to enhancing performance. Resilient organizations prioritize the learning and development of both their employees and the organization as a whole.

Wegner et al. (2002) characterize CoPs in three structural dimensions: domain, community, and practice. The domain of interest is shared between people which will define the identity of the CoP. The participation implies, therefore, a commitment to the domain. The community is the group of people who go after their interest in the domain, engaging with other members and participating in activities and discussions. Relationships are built, and they learn with each other. Finally, the practice is the development of a shared repertoire of resources after discussions and knowledge sharing, like the tools, experiences, stories, and others they will get from the community. However, there must be a shared practice, not only an interest, i.e., the participants need to be involved in the topic to make it a CoP. The combination of these three factors constitutes a Community of Practice (Wegner-Trayner and Wegner-Trayner, 2015).

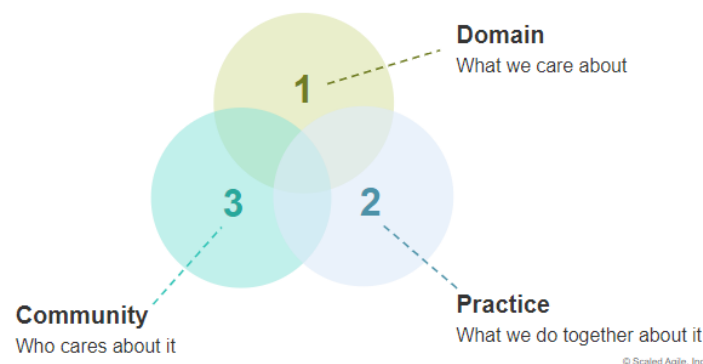


Figure 1. Traits of a Community of Practice in SAFe, 2023

The importance of Communities of Practice lies in several key aspects:

1. Knowledge sharing and learning: CoPs provide a platform for members to exchange knowledge, expertise, and experiences. Through discussions, collaboration, and shared resources, individuals can learn from each other and stay updated on the latest developments in their field.
2. Professional development: Participation in a CoP allows individuals to enhance their skills, expand their knowledge base, and stay relevant in their profession. By interacting with peers who have different perspectives and experiences, members can gain new insights and perspectives that contribute to their professional growth.
3. Problem-solving: CoPs provide a forum for members to collectively address challenges and find solutions to common problems. By leveraging the diverse expertise and experiences within the community, individuals can collaborate to overcome obstacles and improve practices within their field.

4. Networking: CoPs facilitate connections and networking opportunities among professionals with similar interests and goals. Building relationships within the community can lead to new collaborations, career opportunities, and partnerships.
5. Innovation: CoPs foster a culture of innovation by encouraging experimentation, creativity, and the exchange of innovative ideas. Through discussions and exploration of emerging trends and technologies, members can contribute to the advancement of their field and drive innovation within their organizations.

Overall, Communities of Practice, play a vital role in fostering cross-organization collaboration, knowledge sharing, and professional development, leading to improved performance, innovation, and success within a given field or industry.

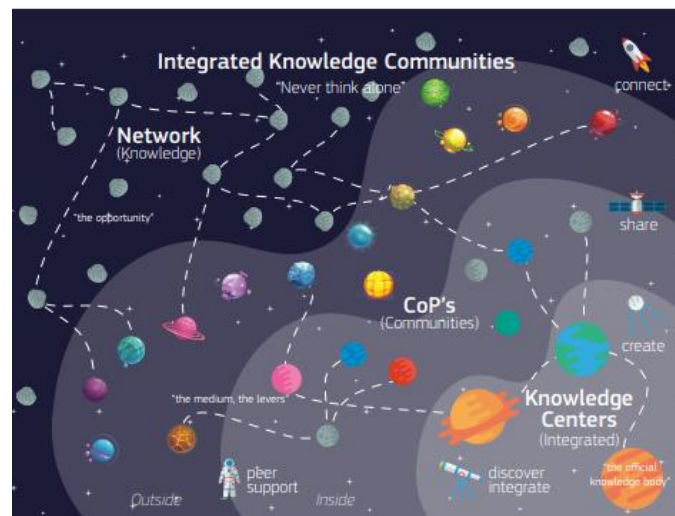


Figure 2. "The Community Universe" in *The Communities of Practice Playbook from EU* (European Commission, Joint Research Centre, 2021).

Communities (of practice) function as the conduit between networks and knowledge centers, facilitating the identification and dissemination of pertinent, practical knowledge. Knowledge centers play a role in organizing, synthesizing, and substantiating this knowledge in a user-friendly, formalized manner with expert guidance. Networks provide a moderated environment for both communities of practice and knowledge centers to delve into novel perspectives on knowledge. The five community success domains of a CoP are (1) shared vision, (2) participation and engagement, (3) community knowledge retention and circulation, (4) trust, confidence, and a sense of community, and (5) inclusive communication (European Commission, Joint Research Centre, 2021).

In the specific case of the SoilValues project, the CoP will be essential to scale up the business model tested by the TG and replicate them across the European Union (EU). As stated in the project's Grant Agreement "The CoPs will also allow for cooperation between land managers, creating economies of scale in production, common sales strategy and common management and procurement of administrative services, which will improve their profitability, and promote the engagement with other partners of the agri-food chain (with both up-and downstream actors)". A bird's eyed view of both the TGs and CoPs could reveal several similarities with a Living Lab. On the one hand there is the analytical assessment being undertaken in the TGs that could be linked to a particular innovation practice, and on another hand, there is a group of experts that come together to discuss and find solutions to develop a roadmap for upscaling the business model. Many of the tools used in WP3 of the SoilValues project are inspired in the general Living Lab



## 2.2 Why form a CoP

CoPs are formed by a small, core group of practitioners who share a common passion and need for a particular domain. The aim is to continuously share knowledge and knowledge between peers, and actors in the same sector, regardless of their position. In this way, it is possible to obtain the best and most complete results surrounding a certain topic.

One of the biggest points in every business at this moment is to be innovative, and innovation depends on human qualities such as curiosity, insight, creativity, and determination. Innovation depends on people applying knowledge in ways that yield innovative solutions to old and recent problems. Most of what comes up in businesses or organizations, stems from a CoP, since this is where best practices and innovations first emerge and where the solutions to shared problems are first identified.

### 3. How to organize a CoP

#### 3.1 CoP's Life cycle

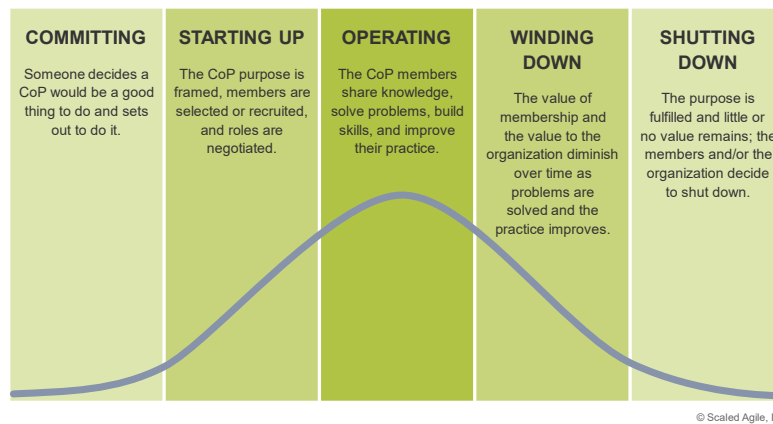


Figure 4. CoP's life cycle (SAFe STUDIO, 2023).

Every CoP has a life cycle (Figure 4), which foresees a beginning, starting with an idea, and an end, when the group feels that the CoP has achieved its main objectives. In the middle stages, the CoP's purpose is developed and defined, reaching its optimal stage at the moment of operations, where the members share their knowledge, solve problems, build skills, and improve their practice.

However, it is possible to continue the CoP's work, even after "the end," which will be discussed in more detail in the Sustainability Plan for the CoPs later<sup>1</sup> and is mentioned in section 4.8 of the present deliverable.

#### 3.2 CoPs' mission and specific goals

The purpose and aims of a CoP should be defined at the start (starting up phase) and should answer the question "Why does this CoP exist?"

As stated in the Grant Agreement, the SoilValues CoPs' aim will be "to further develop and scale up the incentives and business models for soil health that will be tested and validated" by other WPs. The objective is to generate validated business model cases and best practices that can subsequently be implemented on a larger scale. This includes the creation of guidelines featuring recommendations for incentives to guide the development of the roadmap for incentives in WP4.

Additionally, even though the general goal is the same for every CoP, they will also have independent specific goals, since it is correlated with the aim associated to the respective TG. WP1, for example, will set up a multidisciplinary knowledge base that can (and should) feed the CoP's work and help in the discussion process. This WP will provide scientific knowledge on indicators and models to define and verify soil health and ecosystem services and trade-offs related to management practices, data support systems for the exchange of relevant data, and business models in which soil health is a main driver. These are all tasks that will be used to some extent in the CoP's discussion and brainstorming activities. Specific technical doubts will come up during the CoP's discussions about SHBMs. On the other hand, since the CoP is a group of experts, there might also be the case that solutions or alternatives are found during these discussions to tackle technical doubts. Given the boarder work experience of a group of people, other EU project

<sup>1</sup> SoilValues deliverable D3.4 to be submitted in month 48.

indicators or insights might contribute to find further solutions. The agronomical and analytical challenges and solutions discussed in the CoPs should feed WP1 to finetune the assessment framework and produce higher quality results that may contribute for the validation of the sustainability of certain soil health practices. Ultimately, a catalogue of incentives and business models will be derived and used to organize database development in WP3. There is also a connection between WP3 and WP2, as the latter will be responsible for developing an implementation plan for the TGs with clear guidelines for all actors in the TGs in close cooperation with the TG leads, and with the help of the CoPs. This task will then be closely tracked, evaluating the performance of the TGs, which will also be part of the CoP's action plan.

### 3.3 Participants / Organization

A CoP ties to what is called a “practice,” as mentioned in the introduction. Three characteristics or qualities define a practice:

- **Joint enterprise:** The members of a CoP are there to accomplish something on an ongoing basis; they have some kind of work in common and they clearly see the larger purpose of that work. They have a “mission.”
- **Mutual Engagement:** the members of a CoP interact with one another not just while doing their work but to clarify that work, defining how it is done and even how to change it.
- **Shared repertoire:** the members of a CoP have not just work in common but also methods, tools, techniques and even language, stories, and behavior patterns.

To achieve the CoP's main objective – to validate and upscale the SHBM- relevant people should be selected to integrate the CoP according to a stream of relations between:

**Carriers** – People who are at the core of the CoP and will continue the work if other drop-out.

**Factors** – Factors that determine the successful completion of the CoP's objectives: to validate and upscale the SHBM. These are usually not people but important concepts or practices.

**Actors** – Are people that have direct influence over the factors (above). In most cases they are external experts who are not directly involved in SoilValues, but their input would contribute to the CoP's objectives to validate and upscale the SHBM. Actors may play a more active role in the CoP with regular participation or could have more occasional participation.

**Links** – Are people, or organizations, that lease between Carriers and Actors. Sometimes they exist and play important roles in establishing the first connection between Carriers and Actors, but sometimes they do not exist in a Stream at all. Most likely, they would have an occasional participation in the CoP, but depends on each case.

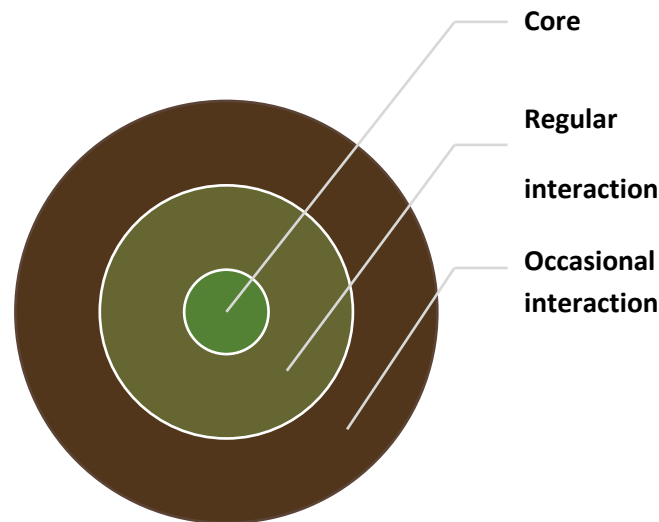
Figure 5 shows the layers of the participants:

**Core team** – Stakeholders who have an operational role related to the application of the SHBM. It is defined by the initiative, the shared ambition of the CoP, or the burning question. Here live the **carriers**.

**Regular interaction** – Stakeholders who are technically knowledgeable about certain aspects along the value chain of the SHBM. The **links** live here, being responsible for linking carriers and **actors** together.



**Occasional interaction** – Stakeholders who have an interest in, and/or influence on, the SHBM applicability. Here live the **actors** who have direct influence over the key factors that will determine the CoP’s success.



*Figure 5. Layers of stakeholders within each CoP.*

It is typical for individuals to transition between various levels of involvement and dedication over time. CoPs operate in a self-organizing manner, granting their members the autonomy to define their engagement level, distinct from other work groups like tiger teams, task forces, and committees. This natural flux of people among communities and engagement levels is beneficial. It facilitates the circulation of new knowledge and innovative ideas throughout the organization in ways that diverge from, yet complement, formal channels of information exchange.

Each CoP will have 30-40 stakeholders.

### 3.4 Defining criteria for the identification of the participants

It is crucial to know the areas of interest and the experience of each participant in the CoP. Participation is portrayed as pivotal in situated learning as it is through active involvement that both identity and practices evolve. Therefore, participation transcends mere physical action or occurrence; it encompasses both action and connection (Handley et al., 2006). The composition of the CoP must be clearly defined and comprehensive, with measures in place to address any deficiencies and ensure diverse representation. Effective handling of diversity is essential. One method that can help in establishing this network is “Stakeholder mapping,” which is a visual method used to identify and organize all stakeholders associated with a community. This visual representation encompasses individuals with an interest in the community, those capable of influencing it, and those likely to be impacted by it. The mapping illustrates the relationships between these individuals and the community. The stakeholder mapping allows us to get an overview of all key stakeholders who could get involved or influence the community.

We commonly observe three primary levels of community participation. The first comprises a small core group of individuals who actively engage in discussions, including debates, within the public community forum. They often spearhead community projects, pinpoint topics for collective

attention, and drive the community forward along its learning path. This core group serves as the community's lifeblood. As the community matures, this core group assumes much of its leadership, with its members functioning as assistants to the community coordinator. However, this group typically remains relatively small, constituting only 10 to 15 percent of the entire community. Beyond this core lies the active group. These members attend meetings regularly and occasionally contribute to community forums, albeit without the consistency or intensity of the core group (Wegner et al., 2002).

First, it is important to identify and list all potential stakeholders. These could be individuals, groups, departments, other structures, communities, networks, or organizations associated with the community's purpose, i.e., actors like land managers, food companies, retailers, advisory services, banks, insurance companies, local communities, local authorities, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), research organizations, etc. Then, the various stakeholders will be categorized by clustering them. There is a need to prioritize the stakeholder categories by using the influence/interest matrix. Once the stakeholders are defined it is possible to establish possible work relationships and act on what has been decided together by drafting an action plan.

Based on the aim of the project, the following criteria in **Error! Reference source not found.** are recommended. This work has been adapted from Annex 2, Deliverable D6.4. Methodological Briefs, from the Horizon 2020 project UNISECO.

*Table 1. Criteria for selection of CoP's participants (adapted from Schwarz et al., 2021).*

<b>Availability / Commitment</b>	It is important, even though not mandatory, that the participants remain the same for the entire life cycle of the CoP so that all actors build trust and are comfortable around each other. So, when asking actors to participate, we must explain the importance of their presence and they should be asked if they can commit to being part of the CoP.
<b>Relevance</b>	Each participant should be relevant to the project as a whole. Some examples are participation in the academic field, some NGOs related to the environment and soil health, members of the government, companies of the sector, farmers, advisors, members of the TGs, and actors who were involved in similar projects (therefore with experience). The CoP must be balanced and ensure it represents a wide range of groups, views, approaches, etc.
<b>Appropriateness</b>	Each participant must be well suited to participate in the CoP, and they cannot have any declared implacable oppositions to a particular stance, topics, scenarios, or alternatives. They must be willing and open to change opinions.
<b>Representativeness</b>	This is important to describe if an individual or body can be considered representative of a particular group. This can be evaluated based on their participation in other networks, memberships, and type of participation in other organizations. When making the invite, it must be clear if they will be representing an organization or as individuals.
<b>Willingness</b>	All participants should be considered based on their willingness to share their knowledge and to accept others. For the CoP to

	succeed, it must have a knowledge exchange, so everyone is willing to share and listen to points of view, concerns, ideas, etc.
<b>Age and Gender</b>	Efforts should be made to make sure that the CoP has no dominating gender and that is well represented in a broad range of ages.
<b>Geographical spread</b>	The participants should be from across the country of each CoP, or from other specific regional areas that make more sense to achieve that CoP's goal.

In every CoP there are many types of participation, an individual can be fully participating or be a more peripheral or occasional participant. Participation can entail learning pathways that diverge from an idealized notion of complete engagement, which is particularly important since not everyone aspires, or can reach, full participation (Handley et al., 2006).

The TG members have to be present in all CoP meetings.

When assembling the network of the CoP, there are a few tips that can help in the choice of participants:

- Make a list of possible candidates – Think of people (avoid organizations) who work (production, advisory or research) in the relevant sector you wish to establish the initiative, and people who work along the value chain.
- Define their purpose in belonging to the CoP – It is important to have a role. So, people know what may be expected of them when joining the CoP.
- Define their influence/power over the CoP – Some actors will be closer to the CoP's core and initiative, meaning their contribution might weight differently along the moments of discussion about the scaling-up process of the business model.
- Define their motivations – Given different actors may come from different segments along the value chain this may generate, in some cases, a sensitive discussion. For that reason, it is helpful to understand and be honest from the beginning about everyone's motivations to join the CoP. Their purpose and motivation are linked.
- Define their previous experience in similar work – If you have actors joining the CoP with previous experiences use them to stimulate the discussion and to prepare exercises and dynamics. Stakeholder participation in these dynamics is facilitated by the example of experienced actors.
- Conclusions about the analysis made. Does the group of people identified have the necessary knowledge to contribute to the CoP's objectives and initiatives? If so, the network is complete for now, until new challenges arise requiring a distinct set of skills. If not, it might be necessary to involve the people already identified in the network analysis until a strong group is identified.

### 3.5 Motivation (What motivates the participants in collaborating)

As CoPs operate on a voluntary basis, their long-term success hinges on their capacity to generate sufficient excitement, relevance, and value to entice and involve members. While numerous

factors like management backing or addressing pressing issues can initiate a community, nothing can replace the vitality and vibrancy it brings (Wegner et al., 2002).

One approach to fostering curiosity in engaging in community interactions is by bridging formal and informal interests and action aspirations. Additionally, leading by example and receiving support from management are crucial motivators in this regard. Knowledge pooling and spawning of innovative ideas are a strong advantage for the engagement of the participants.

Trust, confidence, and a sense of community are also of significant importance to maintain the participants involved. Management involvement through setting an example and providing official sponsorship serves as a driving force for CoPs. Peer interaction and knowledge exchange, along with transparent, inclusive, and diverse membership, as well as participatory decision-making processes, are crucial for fostering trust. Nurturing and guiding naturally formed community structures enhances the perception of an informal and welcoming community atmosphere, thereby fostering a trusted environment characterized by a sense of collective solidarity. Additionally, the CoPs need to have inclusive and simple communication to break down potential communication barriers among stakeholders.

It is important to organize meetings with some time dedicated to socializing, like coffee breaks, lunches, dynamics, etc. This will make everyone more comfortable and help build relationships, making the participants eager to share their thoughts with others. Having these breaks will also give the idea that they are not forced to be there and that it is an informal and uncomplicated way to connect and share knowledge. Additionally, it will make participants want to engage and offer their work because it is something that can be enjoyable (Wegner et al., 2002).

When individuals share a common vision, they grasp the direction of the community, its role in fostering the growth of its members, the organization, and other stakeholders, as well as the necessary steps for success. They comprehend how their contributions influence the broader goals, such as the organization's success, and they feel empowered, knowing they play a pivotal role in making a meaningful impact. Establishing precise and measurable goals offers community members a definitive path to follow. With clear objectives in place, the community understands its deliverables, enabling the implementation of effective plans to attain them (European Commission, Joint Research Centre, 2021).

There is a concern that should be addressed and considered since it can be detrimental to motivation, and that is the relations of power. Full participation can be denied to novices by powerful participants, as they may consider that such opinions are not valuable. In those cases, the management group of the CoP needs to intervene. Therefore, the interplay between identity development and modes of participation is crucial in how individuals internalize, challenge, or reject the established practices within their community (Handley et al., 2006).

Through the SoilValues CoPs, the participants can improve their individual profitability, as well as improve their engagement with other partners of the agri-food chain, by participating in co-learning and co-creation dynamics, generating new relevant insights and will, ultimately, be rewarded with tested and successful SHBMs.

### 3.6 When and how to convene meetings

Convening is the way of bringing the CoP and relevant stakeholders together to engage in conversations and sharing knowledge. It is important to convene the CoP regularly since it involves communicating with members, connecting them, and encouraging conversations.

Knowing when to convene meetings strongly depends on the CoP goals and the stakeholders' mindset. It is recommended, at least in the initial stages, to make an icebreaker or social get-together at the beginning of each meeting, to make everyone more comfortable with each other.

Finding the appropriate communication channels is of significant importance. Should the meeting be online? Should it be in person? Choices must be made regarding whether engagement will be conducted face-to-face or remotely. For instance, meetings can occur either in person or remotely using online platforms (like Zoom or Microsoft Teams). The decision-making process is often influenced by the activity's purpose, the chosen methodology (e.g., focus groups), and the time constraints of both participants and partners needed to execute the activity. Remote engagements offer advantages such as increased participant availability and saving on travel time. If the objective of an activity is to foster shared understanding across diverse policy sectors in supporting agroecological farming systems, group-based face-to-face or online contact may be preferable to individual interviews or online surveys (Schwarz et al., 2021).

The meetings should occur regularly every three months, however, it is not mandatory since every CoP is different and will have their strategy. Still, it is important to meet at least twice a year, one of the meetings being in person.

### 3.7 Designing activities and action plan

In the starting up phase of the CoP there will be a set of issues formulated, as well as an end goal for the CoP. Therefore, the activity plan should be formulated on this basis, to enable knowledge co-creation.

Understanding the nature of engagement within a specific activity is crucial (Purpose of Engagement). Activities often encompass various forms of involvement, such as data collection and collaborative problem-solving. Determining the desired forms of engagement for each activity involves aligning with its objectives. For instance, in a project aiming to gather stakeholder insights on the transition to agroecological farming systems, the appropriate engagement approach should be chosen accordingly (Schwarz et al., 2021).

Furthermore, it is essential to assess how participants stand to benefit from each activity. These benefits should be evident in the outcomes and outputs defined for both the project and its participants. Therefore, it is advisable to i) establish clear objectives for each activity; ii) outline the benefits of participation; and iii) communicate these goals and benefits clearly to all involved parties (Schwarz et al., 2021).

As for the spatial and temporal context, it is important to consider the location, timing, and methodological infrastructure required for the activity's implementation. Alongside these factors, account for the time and budget needed to organize the activity. For instance, for an in-person event, booking a venue in advance is necessary. For online activities, identifying a platform with suitable functionality, acquiring licenses, and addressing cybersecurity concerns for secure participant access are essential considerations (Schwarz et al., 2021).

The flow and content of information play a pivotal role in facilitating meaningful engagement and the co-construction of knowledge. Information should be tailored to suit the project, the activity, and the participants' needs. Partners should possess a comprehensive understanding of the project's various steps and the integration of results across work packages. Adequate time and resources should be allocated for the preparation and dissemination of materials to facilitate effective engagement (Schwarz et al., 2021).

Activities are designed to produce outputs and outcomes beneficial to both the project and its participants. Outputs are short-term results, immediately apparent post-activity, while outcomes are mid-term achievements, typically occurring months afterward. These may be process-related (e.g., willingness to participate in subsequent activities) or tangible (e.g., a collaboratively developed strategy). Clear outputs and outcomes are crucial for monitoring, evaluating, and establishing expectations for the activity's participants. Sufficient time and resources should be allocated for their development, as well as for integrating monitoring and evaluation processes into the activities (Schwarz et al., 2021).

The CoPs will evaluate the scalability and replicability of the opportunities that will come from the TGs, assessing the new business models created to capture value for land managers from investing in soil health, building bridges, and raising awareness of all stakeholders, through knowledge sharing, guaranteeing the continuity of the agronomic practices and reassuring the cooperation beyond the boundaries of the project.

An action plan for the SoilValues CoPs is more detailed in section 4.3.

## 4. CoPs in SoilValues

### 4.1 Engaging stakeholders and diversity contexts

As has been addressed, the common initiative of a CoP is the main reason the different actors will come together. Within SoilValues, this means the embryos of each CoP are formed as soon as the TG begins to take shape following the CoP implementation timeline proposed in the DoA. The strong relationship between the initial CoPs and the TGs means that the TG Leaders, farmers, and land managers involved in the establishment of the TG must take part in some of the main roles that will govern the CoP's activities. The main drivers for each TG have been described in the DoA and build on existing relationships and networks established during other European projects. So, the recruitment of relevant actors for the CoP will begin in the TG but should not end there. As described above, the CoPs should be used to create synergies across the value chain of the SHBM. This means the CoP should reach out to the TG to invite relevant people and associations to take part in the discussion, in particular referring to the validation and scale-up of the SHBM.

The selection of the SoilValues TGs and subsequent CoPs was made during project conceptualization to ensure diversity in terms of pedoclimatic region, socio-economic context, and governmental/institutional involvement. This diversity brings great merit to active research projects such as SoilValues, but it also comes with a particular set of challenges. Namely, the necessary local adaptation of the soil health analysis used during testing and the implications the SHBM might have towards incentives. The CoPs will play a key role by assisting in defining the local guidance to other WPs so they may produce relevant results through the adaptation of the soil health analysis and the incentives toolbox.

### 4.2 Management Body

CoPs can be informal and almost self-managing, i.e., community members are empowered to design the type of interactions and determine the frequency that best meets their needs, but always with guidance.

There are a few principles that can be considered when managing a CoP, like keeping things simple and informal, fostering trust, ensuring the rapid flow of communication and shared awareness, and increasing the shared body of knowledge developed in the CoP.

However, there must be a decision-making structure, which should be clear, flexible, inclusive, open, and fair. These governance structures are important to serve the community purpose, i.e., the validation of the business model at a broader scale, the development of road maps for scaling up at the regional level, to produce validated business model cases, and to create good practice guidelines. They are also essential to ensure the participants' motivation by guaranteeing that everyone is satisfied, through strategies aimed at this purpose.

#### **Facilitator's Role (mandatory)**

Facilitation involves optimizing the vibrant social dynamics within a community to leverage its combined intelligence. It entails fostering a secure environment for collaborative efforts, nurturing trust, and fostering a sense of inclusion. Successful community design hinges on grasping the community's capacity to cultivate and manage knowledge, yet it frequently necessitates an external perspective to illuminate potential avenues for its members.

The facilitator, i.e., the project's partners, needs to guarantee that there are no issues in the CoP and between participants, especially between the participants and the CoP's coordinators. The facilitator will be responsible for sharing the CoP's acknowledgments and findings with the consortium, particularly with WP1, WP2 and WP4, where a Policy Delphi approach will be adopted to inform the development of a roadmap that explains how to design and implement effective incentives to promote soil health. Facilitators do not have to be present in all CoP's meetings (except in the first one), however, they may be asked to attend if needed. Facilitators have the right to ask a participant to leave the CoP if they notice that someone is jeopardizing the teamwork. The facilitator also serves as a guide, in the sense that they must know the processes from the beginning to the end of the CoP and must guide every participant through each phase.

### **Coordinator's Role (mandatory)**

A coordinator should be nominated as an informal CoP manager, credible to all CoP members, and with dedicated time and support to conduct the role effectively. The CoP coordinator's role and tasks should be shared with the CoP facilitators, who are members of the core group, which will increase the co-ownership of community leadership.

Effective community design necessitates an insider's viewpoint to spearhead the exploration of the community's essence. It is important to have an insider coordinating the CoP because in that way they can have close contact with the CoP's issues and challenges, mission, information shared, and knowledge required to achieve the CoP's goals, and ultimately, they will know the participants and their relationships, which are all factors that can help coordinate the team and guiding it to its objectives. The coordinator will organize events that will bring the community closer together (Wegner et al., 2002). Additionally, they are the ones who keep the meetings on track, making sure that every task is completed, cutting short any irrelevant discussions, which prevents detours. Ultimately, they must keep everyone motivated, making sure that the developed CoP's action plans are being fulfilled. It is important to provide the stakeholders with something that adds value to their activities, to keep the motivation going, which in this case will be the business models and other outputs of the project, like the good practices guide.

The coordinator has the responsibility to convene meetings according to the principles referred to in section 3.6. It is important the coordinators define the strategy of their specific CoP before the first meeting so that the next ones can be scheduled according to the pointed necessities and participants' characteristics. The coordinator may be assisted by the monitor role.

### **Monitor's Role (recommended)**

The monitor will keep a diary of the action plan, report CoP activities back to WP3, and implement the evaluation plan. This person will assist the coordinator in the more practical and bureaucratic tasks.

### **Note-Keeper's Role (recommended)**

The note-keeper should attend every meeting and must register every important topic discussed as well as every intervention made. In the end, every CoP should have a record of every meeting, about what was the discussion, the problems presented, and the solutions created.

## **4.3 Action Plan and timeline for CoP assembly**



Since CoPs are dynamic and organic entities, guiding their development is more about nurturing their evolution than constructing them. Design components ought to serve as catalysts that facilitate the natural progression of a community. As the community expands, fresh members introduce new interests, potentially diverting the community's focus in various directions. Organizational shifts also impact the community's significance and impose fresh obligations on it. The aim of design is not to enforce a rigid structure but rather to facilitate the community's growth. Effective community design demands an insider's viewpoint to guide the exploration of the community's essence (Wegner et al., 2002).

The starting point should be the purpose or the mission of the community and the definition of its objectives. Additionally, a strategy, with SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) high-level objectives, should be developed in support of the vision defined.

The CoP's action plan can be found in Appendix A.

#### 4.4 Monitoring and Evaluating CoPs

The CoPs should be reviewed after a year of work, or every 6 months if the CoPs' strategy and meeting plans justify it. This report will help to evaluate if the participants are engaged and cooperating, and a re-selection of participants can take place if needed. If a member does not fulfill the necessary requests, then they can be asked to stand down from the CoP, and an alternative member should be sought. The same goes if a member requests to withdraw. The objective is to analyze the interactions among participants through the diverse participatory methods employed within the project.

The activity plan also needs revision, to see if the goals are being checked or if, at least, the CoP is going in the right direction.

A Framework with identified key research questions is displayed in Appendix B.

The results should be analyzed by the coordinators and the facilitators, to share the results with the consortium. This report can help CoPs improve since they will learn the dos and don'ts from each other. Figure 6 offers a relationship chart between different CoPs.

The SoilValues Grant Agreement refers to specific KPIs for all CoPs when it comes to land managers approached. More specifically, the document mentions the two groups of 6 CoPs (linked with TGs and the enlargements / new countries) should engage 130 to 185 land managers. This means an average of 22 to 31 land managers per CoP.

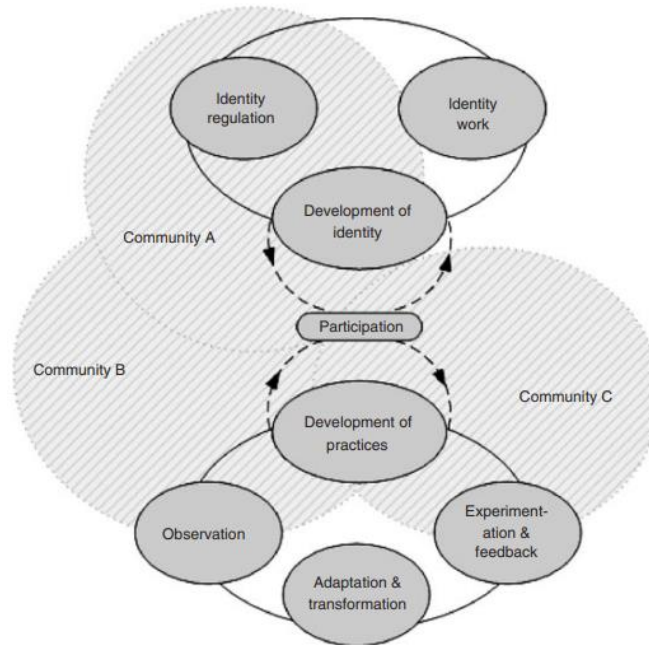


Figure 6. Interaction between Communities and individual learning (in Handley et al. 2006).

## 4.5 Validation and Scaling-up

The CoPs should validate the business models presented in each TG, to ensure its compliance with the objectives of SoilValues and with the best practices performed to increase soil health. It is crucial to evaluate the work done on the TG, testing the theories and results. The goal is to assess, based on the CoP's participants' knowledge, if the results gathered by the TG are easily applicable in other farms around each country while being economically viable and sustainable. If any barrier is encountered, the CoP should find solutions to evolve and enable the validation process and consequent upscaling. WP4's work is essential to tackle this issue since it will develop a role of incentives that will support the decision-making to improve soil health.

As stated in the Grant Agreement "SoilValues will engage stakeholders related to other land uses in the CoPs to investigate how SoilValues insights and methods can be upscaled to other land uses, such as forestry and urban areas. One of the scaled-up CoPs will be in Lithuania and will be organized by FOAL, the Forest and Landowners' Association of Lithuania, which has a large forester membership base. Finally, SoilValues will link with other EU projects specifically targeted at peatland (via EV ILVO) and forest use (via ELO)."

In the second phase of the CoPs work, there will be a division into two groups, the first for enlargement in the initial countries and the second to reach different countries:

- Enlargement - three of the six initial CoPs will be enlarged within the same countries defined at the beginning (i.e., Belgium, The Netherlands, and Germany) and will be linked to the TGs. They give input to and obtain feedback from the TGs regularly.
- Scale-up - three additional CoPs in three additional countries (i.e., Spain, Lithuania, and Serbia) will be set up. The additional CoPs will perform fewer activities than the first ones.

The additional CoPs will mainly explore the development of tested business models in new contexts, both within the existing countries and the three new ones.

## 4.6 Proposed Calendar and materials for CoPs' activities

The Grant Agreement does not establish a calendar for CoP activities, but it refers two milestones (MS) for WP3 regarding the first meetings to be held by the different CoPs:

- MS5 – June 2024 – First meeting to be held by the six initial CoPs linked to the TGs.
- MS6 – June 2025 – First meeting to be held by the six additional CoPs (three CoPs are enlargements of previous ones and three others are set up in new countries).

Given these milestones, WP3 has drafted a proposed calendar of activities for the CoPs throughout the project, as can be seen in Table 2.

The CoP meeting is to be held in person with as many land managers as relevant at the stage of the discussion regarding the validation and the establishment of avenues to scale up the SHBMs. These are the profoundly important meetings that will be WP3's driving force. The meetings will be organized by the CoP management body in each country and will begin by establishing the challenges, learning questions about validation, and scaling up of the SHBM.

The General Assemblies will be short meetings between WP3, and the CoP management bodies to reflect on the CoP meetings, the challenges faced, the cross-fertilized management experiences, and identified opportunities to tackle specific challenges that might be common to different CoPs.

All meetings mentioned in Table 2 are what WP3 understands to be the bare minimum effort that each CoP should conduct to meet their objectives. However, the CoP management bodies are welcome to schedule more meetings than those suggested as long as the budget reserved for the CoP meeting is respected. The timings defined are suggestions to maintain CoP meetings spread across the project's duration and to enable the discussion to progress according to the work done in the other WPs referring to the analysis and the incentives. However, there are two timings (in bold) that are requirements by the Grant Agreement and therefore all partners must comply.

Since the activities for the six additional CoPs only start in June 2025, only the second half of the planning is relevant in this case. The six initial CoPs linked to the TGs are welcome to follow the entire planning.

A series of materials have been prepared and made available on the project's common SharePoint for the partners to use during their CoP meetings. The templates are under the [WP3 Tool's folder](#). The templates provided include:

- Project, TG and CoP presentation – A template that summarizes SoilValues' main objectives and structure, as well as the operational drivers of both TGs and CoPs.
- Jump start the discussion – Templates for CoP boundaries, Problem definition, Stakeholder Mapping, and identification of Resources, Collaborations Capabilities, and Innovations (RCCI analysis).
- Action Plan – Templates for the overall SoilValues CoP action plan, and individual CoP action plan.
- Evaluation – Spider diagram template to monitor and evaluate the importance of certain parameters and the progression of the discussion towards the CoP goal.

Table 2. Proposed list of meetings within WP3.

		Time	Description of activity
Calendar proposed for six initial CoPs linked to the TGs		June 2024	CoP meeting
		September 2024	1st General Assembly of CoP management bodies. [Online]
		December 2024	CoP meeting
		March 2024	2nd General Assembly [Online]
	Calendar proposed for six additional CoPs	June 2025	CoP meeting. First CoP meeting for the six additional CoPs.
		September 2025	3rd General Assembly [Online]
		December 2025	CoP meeting
		March 2026	4th General Assembly [Online]
		Jun 2026	CoP meeting

## 4.7 Dissemination strategy

WP3 has a specific objective to engage 130 to 180 land managers in each group of 6 CoPs during the project. This document outlines the strategy and plans to achieve this specific objective while guaranteeing the CoPs provide the necessary support to the other WPs. This way the project may deliver a detailed evaluation, comprehending the validation and scaling up strategies for emerging SHBMs across Europe.

Additionally, and regarding the forms of collaboration with other projects, the efforts to build the CoPs will be based on the collaboration work already done in the framework of national and European projects, like LIFT, SURE-Farm, MIXED, EFFECT, Contracts2.0, UNISECO, and Klimrek<sup>2</sup>.

In the bigger picture, the successful implementation of the mission supports several EU policy and international commitments concerning land degradation neutrality, food and nutrition security, climate and biodiversity, e.g. Sustainable Development Goals, UNCCD, UN CBD, Green Deal including the Farm to Fork Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy, new Soil Strategy, Zero pollution Strategy, Forestry Strategy or the Long-term Vision for Rural Areas.

Since the CoPs include active participants and more peripheral ones, they will be more likely to continue their work and cooperation beyond the boundaries of the project. This can happen in three ways:

- by attracting new farmers (horizontal cooperation).
- by introducing and linking farmers to downstream partners to realize business models (vertical cooperation), and

<sup>2</sup> You can check the projects' websites at: [www.lift-bbi.eu](http://www.lift-bbi.eu), [www.surefarmproject.eu](http://www.surefarmproject.eu), [www.projects.au.dk/mixed/](http://www.projects.au.dk/mixed/), [www.project-effect.eu](http://www.project-effect.eu), [www.project-contracts20.eu](http://www.project-contracts20.eu), [www.uniseco-project.eu](http://www.uniseco-project.eu), [www.klimrekproject.be](http://www.klimrekproject.be), in the same order.

- by building bridges and raising awareness of all stakeholders (SoilValues Grant Agreement).

Consequently, CoPs facilitate knowledge sharing and cooperation. This, in turn, will ensure the sustainability of agronomic practices and collaboration beyond the project's duration, even after its termination.

Another way of ensuring the CoPs' continuity is by linking them with other current projects and future ones. There will be a great community already formed, by stakeholders who are motivated and educated on these subjects, so they would only be beneficial if used in other work on this thematic area.

## 4.8 Sustainability Plan for the CoPs after SoilValues

One of the final objectives of WP3 is to analyse the potential to build a long-lasting community with stakeholders at EU / regional / national level. For that purpose, a CoP sustainability strategy will be developed during the last year of the project.

This strategy will begin by analysing the background of the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS), as well as the policy measures and funding incentives at the country, regional, and EU levels that support the SHBMs discussed in the CoPs. Following this analysis, the task will involve each of the 12 CoPs to assess the conditions and willingness of the stakeholders to sustain these communities after the project's conclusion. The CoPs could be scaled up into permanent (cooperative or non-cooperative) structures that continue to develop their expertise, making it available to the existing partners and the new stakeholders that may join the CoP in the future. For instance, there is increasing recognition from the EU Commission that Carbon Farming on individual farms might be challenging and that managing it at farm group level, working together on a landscape scale, might be a more effective approach (European Commission, Directorate-General for Climate Action, 2021).

Furthermore, the CAP Common Market Organisation regulation explicitly includes instruments, such as producer organizations, interbranch organizations, and financing (pillar II) for the development of these types of organizations. The aim is to develop a sustainability strategy for the CoPs to enable the establishment of an EU-level forum dedicated to incentives and business models for soil health.

However, it is important to note that this strategy is to be implemented in the final stages of the project and after its completion. Meaning that, despite worth mentioning the post-project aim of building a long-lasting community, the starting point for the CoPs should be SoilValues intentions driven and should include specific objectives to be achieved during the project's lifetime following the logic described in section 3.1. Otherwise, the CoPs run the risk of suffering from long timeline inertia and face additional challenges to reach their goals within the project.

## 5. Network Analysis

### 5.1 Preliminary exercise and results

During the second annual SoilValues consortium meeting held in Aarhus in October 2023, WP3 provided an overview of strategy here described in detail for the SoilValues CoPs. During the meeting, WP3 also organized a workshop to prepare and contextualize TG Leaders about the network analysis on the current state of their TG. At that moment there were some uncertainties around the final shape of TGs and how exactly SoilValues would make its assessment. For that reason, the objective of this exercise was to stimulate the use of the network analysis to structure the CoPs and indirectly help to structure the human frame of the TGs in SoilValues. During this workshop materials like the template in Figure 7 were presented to the plenary and two groups were formed to discuss relevant actor types like NGOs, processing industry, research institution, etc. Since it was not possible to complete the network analysis for each TG given the complexity of the exercise, WP3 asked the TG Leaders to complete the network analysis using the materials provided after the annual meeting.

The networks analysis is meant to achieve two main objectives:

- Assist partners (those who require it) in establishing a relevant network to discuss and agree upon a methodology to validate and scale-up the SHBMs.
- Summarizing the people present and their relevance to each CoP. Since the European Commission is financing the project (and therefore the CoPs), it is important to explain why these people are meeting and what are the planned outcomes of these meetings.

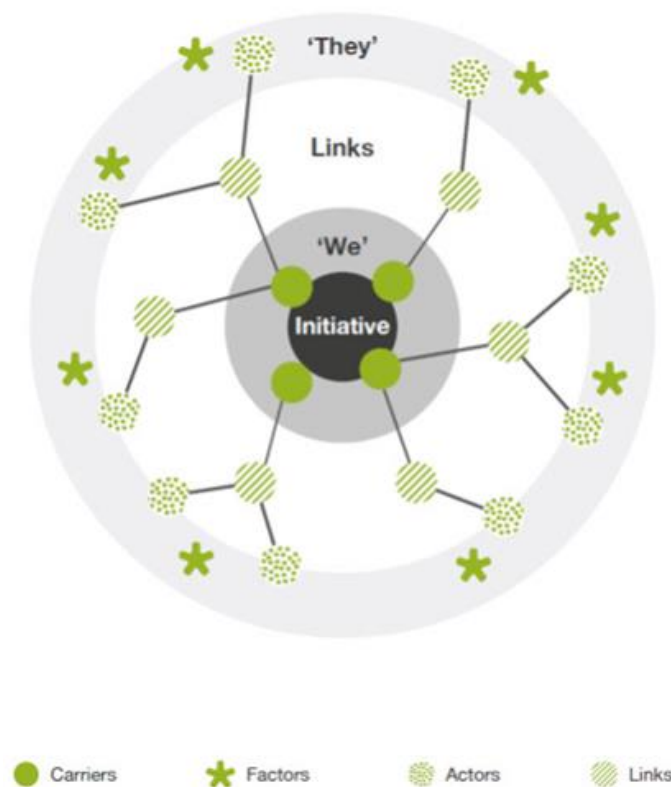


Figure 7. Template used for the Network Analysis based on the i2connect project toolbox (i2 connect, 2022).

During the workshop, the following important definitions were provided:

- **Cops' main objective and success determinants** – To validate and to scale-up the SHBM.
- **Initiative** – Is the main reason (topic) why a specific CoP will try to achieve its objectives. It is the main driver of the CoP's agenda during the project. It has been summarized as the “burning question” or the “common urgency” that brings a group of people together (within a CoP) to further discuss.
- **Carriers** – People who are at the core of the CoP and will continue the work if others drop-out.
- **Factors** – Factors that determine the successful completion of the CoP's objectives: to validate and upscale the SHBM. These are usually not people but important concepts or practices.
- **Actors** – Are people that have direct influence over the factors. In most cases they are external experts that are not directly involved in SoilValues, but their input would contribute to the CoP's objectives to validate and scale-up the SHBM. Actors may play a more active role in the CoP with regular participation or could have a more occasional participation.
- **Links** – Are people, or organizations, that liaise between Carriers and Actors. Sometimes they exist and play important roles to establish the first connection between Carriers and Actors, but sometimes they do not exist in a Stream at all. Most likely, they would have an occasional participation in the CoP, but this depends on each case.
- **Streams** – During our discussion in the meeting in Aarhus it was noted that relevant people should be selected to integrate the CoP according to a stream of relations between Factors, Carriers, Links and Actors.

The preliminary results of this analysis were positive, and all TGs were able to complete the template. The CoP management body was identified in most cases, in other cases the facilitator and note keeper role were yet to be defined. Nonetheless, the results for each TG are not reported here since in most cases the network analysis is a living document and is meant to assist the CoP management body to establish priorities about the relevant actors to approach and recruit for the CoP with a laid-out intention. All the results can be consulted in the project's SharePoint folder. The initial network analysis was used to identify the first group of land managers to be approached and integrated in each of the six initial CoPs (Table 3).

The following initiatives have been defined by the CoP Management Body for the 6 CoPs linked to the TGs:

**Belgium** - Improvement of soil fertility and soil health through the application of high-quality compost and the production such compost based on locally sourced biomass flows.

**Denmark** - Development of durable SHBMs that are ecosystem service-driven for small scale regenerative farmers.

**Germany**- Creation, continuation, and expansion of the idea of soil health focussed farming in circular systems to produce healthy soils, farm products and energy.

**Netherlands**- Develop sustainable community driven farming system financially, socially, and ecologically and developing and using tools to better understand and analyse the farm system and its components.

**Poland** - Regenerative agriculture in the sugar beet production value chain.

**Portugal** - Improvement of soil quality, health of the Montado system and environmental protection through balance greenhouse gas emissions with grasslands rich in legumes.

*Table 3. Number of land managers engaged during the setting-up of the TG at the moment of the network analysis exercise.*

<b>CoP linked with TG</b>	<b>Land managers approached</b>
Belgium	3 (maybe more)
Denmark	9
Germany	5
Netherlands	4
Poland	7
Portugal	4



## 6. Conclusions

This document provides a summary of the most relevant materials in the literature about the importance and the organization of a CoP. That summary is then related to the SoilValues methodology and with the main objectives of the CoPs during this project. This document also provides a strategy for the implementation of 12 CoPs across Europe within the SoilValues project by identifying the CoPs mission, goals, structure, governance model and dissemination strategy. It has been established that the TGs and their relevant actors are a fundamental part of each CoP. In particular, the CoP management body should include members of the TG. This is the only way to ensure the CoPs keep their relevance to assist the TGs, the assessment framework, and the development of the incentive toolbox. The TG leaders have completed a network analysis, as a preliminary exercise, for each of the 6 initial CoPs and identified the initiative that will attract the relevant actors to actively participate in the project. A detailed timeline and road map for the CoPs is provided and will serve to govern both progress and success of the CoPs in SoilValues.

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## Appendix A: CoP's action plan

Table A1. CoP's action plan.

Phase	What		When	How	Who	KPIs?
Committing	Starting a CoP		M13-M16	Guidelines on D3.1.	Facilitators	Six initial CoP's
Starting up	Defining CoP's Purpose	General objective	M1	Connected to the project's goals	Facilitators and TG	Initiative defined on stakeholder analysis.
		Specific objectives	M16/17	Connected to the TG's goals		
	Selection of participants	Core members	M15-M16	Stakeholder analysis	Facilitators (and TGs)	At least four members
		Other participants	M16	Stakeholder mapping	Core team	30-40 members
Define roles (coordinator, monitor, note keeper)		In/after the first CoP meeting	Analyzing the first meeting participation	Facilitators	Mandatory: Coordinator + Note keeper Recommended: monitor	
Operating	Convene meetings	Online	M17-M48	Choose the best platform: Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.	Coordinator	At least once a year
		In-person	M17-M48	Find and prepare a venue	Coordinator	At least once a year
	Define the topics to assess in every meeting		M17-M48	Related to the TG and the engaging subjects	Coordinator + Monitor	Previous to every meeting
	Keeping participants motivated		M17-M18	Activities/Socializing /Team building/Coffee breaks	Facilitators and coordinators	Maximum of five dropouts
	Participation in workshops		M17-M48	Connection with other WP	All participants	At least one workshop
	Assist solving TG operational challenges		M17-M48	Brainstorming/ Knowledge sharing	CoP's members	At least one brainstorming session
	CoP's Evaluation		Every 6 months	With the help of table 2 from the CoPs strategic plan	Coordinator + Monitor	At least once a year
	Improve practices		M17-M18	Knowledge sharing / practical work	CoP's members and TG	D2.2 + action point during CoP meeting
	Validation		M42	Discussing the TG's results	CoP's members	WP2 results (D2.3)
	Scaling up		M25-48	Development of second phase CoPs	All members	Six additional CoPs
Winding down	Practices discussed and tested	List of all the information gathered by the CoPs meetings	M32-M48	The Note keeper keeps a record of all meetings and by the end should have a list of the shared solutions	All members + Note Keeper	D3.2 + D3.3 + D3.5 + D3.6
	Problems solved					

Shutting down	Build a sustainability strategy	M37-M48	Link to other projects	CONSULAI and facilitators	D3.4
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## Appendix B: Evaluation guidelines for the CoPs

Table B1. Evaluation guidelines for the CoPs.

Aspects to Evaluate		Key Questions
Participants	Engagement	Did the CoP reach all relevant groups?
	Motivation	Did the participants feel motivated? Were there any dropouts?
	Participation Objectives	Did the participants achieve what has been set out in the beginning?
	Interactions	Were there any problems during the participants' interaction?
		The chosen participants were the right ones?
Coordinators	Did the coordinators represent well their tasks?	
Methodology	Methods of engagement selected	Were the selected methods useful? (Online/in-person, interaction platforms, etc.)
		What difficulties did you found in planning?
		What could have been done differently that could work better in this CoP?
		What were the best dynamics?
	Execution process	Challenges faced during the implementation process?
		What worked well, i.e., what helped reach the objectives?
Impact	Knowledge	Was there a good knowledge transaction?
		Did the CoP facilitate mutual learning?
		Can the resultant knowledge be helpful for the project?
		Did the participants feel that they received some benefits?
	Objectives	Did the CoP meet its purpose?
		What were the lessons learned for the project team and the participants?
	Future work	Does the CoP have the capacity to keep working after the end of the project?
What should be changed?		

## Appendix C: Template to complete the network analysis

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19 The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union Horizon Europe (HORIZON)

20 Research & Innovation programme under the Grant Agreement no. 1010213108 

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**Coordinator**  
Develop the CoPs action plans.

**Monitor**  
Keep a diary of the action plan, report on CoP activities back to WP3, and implement de evaluation plan.

**Facilitator**  
Involving the relevant stakeholders in the appropriate frames of discussion.

**Note Keeper**  
Assist the coordinator, facilitator and monitor with information from the CoP meetings.

**Dream Team**

	Coordinator	Facilitator	Monitor	Note Keeper
Name				
Email				

CoP Management Body Network Analysis

Figure B1. CoP management body.

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