



2020

D1.4 Communication Strategy

ALINA LIFE FORMULATIONS IN OPEN-SOURCE PLATFORM

LIFE17 ENV/LV/000318



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Background information

Role of communication strategy is aligned with LIFE-ALFIO project outputs, to reach specific targets, with focus on ST3 -To promote and to make easily transferable VOCs and biocide diminishing options by developing an online platform for: 1) paint formulation publishing, 2) transparency and traceability of paint and coating components, 3) industry communication.

Communication strategy is developed to integrate and cover the needs for On-line platform marketing plan. Integrating both activities into one document, is a logical step to make one timeline that support LIFE-ALFIO project result and LIFE-ALFIO on-line platform communication requirements. This approach allows the use of the LIFE-ALFIO online platform as the main communication tool to achieve both the dissemination objectives / targets as well LIFE-ALFIO on-line platform awareness and engagement objectives.

Communication strategy provides a guidance and principles towards LIFE-ALFIO project result communication within industry stakeholders, supporting and engaging professional communities. Prioritizing industry awareness and engagement into LIFE-ALFIO platform, planned results include reaching audience of 500 companies and 130 000 people/ individuals, preferably industry and environment professionals whose interests and needs interact with scope and outcomes of LIFE-ALFIO project. Accordingly, to the Table no.1, industry stakeholders could be organized in the following groups:

Table no.1, LIFE-ALFIO stakeholder.

Painting and Coating industry stakeholders	Paint and Coating manufacturers	Binder material suppliers	End users, individuals	Academic institutions
	Industry associations	Policy makers	Clusters and other NGOs	Architects
Construction and finishing material Industry stakeholders	Bentonite manufacturers		Pigment manufacturers	

LIFE_ALFIO emphasize the need to reduce the impact of toxic chemicals on the environment and human health by reducing toxic biocides and VOCs in paint and coating formulations with a safe, sustainable and novel organoclay-based material. The overall project objective is reachable via systematic change, where all industry related stakeholders' involvement is essential. For the project needs, Paint and Coating manufacturers are the most important customers/ clients as they are the online platform potential users.

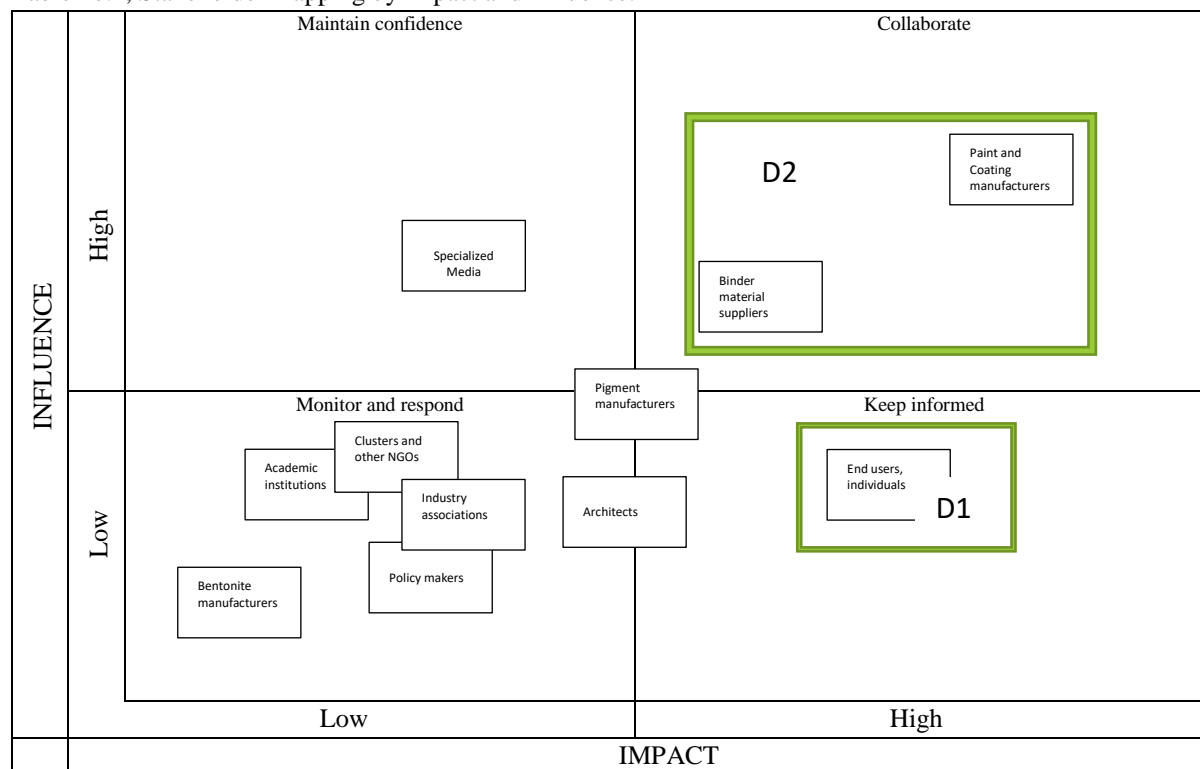
Referencing to the table no.2, it gives overall understanding about the different stakeholders and what level of impact LIFE-ALFIO project has on a Stakeholders and what level of stakeholder buy-in is needed for the project. Paint and Coating manufacturers as well as Binder manufacturers are selected as the main / key stakeholders where collaboration play critical role, by prioritizing and bringing to the front paint and coating manufacturers who are identified as potential users of the LIFE-ALFIO platform within the project. Hereinafter in the framework of the communication strategy, this group is called industry professionals (D2). Clusters, Industry associations, Academic institutions, policy makers are the groups of stakeholders, that are identified with a low impact, low

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influence to the LIFE-ALFIO project. It is recommended to monitor industry professional (D2) stakeholders' activities and respond accordingly in a framework of LIFE-ALFIO project needs.

End-users, individuals that are actual paint and coating product users, are positioned as medium high impact and low influence stakeholders, where keeping them informed about the LIFE-ALFIO project is one of the key objectives. Hereinafter in the framework of the communication strategy, this group is called General public (D1).

Table no.2, Stakeholder mapping by impact and influence.



IMPACT: extent by which the project will impact selected stakeholders.

INFLUENCE: extent to which stakeholder by-in is needed to move forward.

It is important to note the industry media as a major stakeholder with low impact and high influence, that should be considered very important for LIFE-ALFIO project communication to reach industry professionals. From business model perspective, industry media is channel to reach potential customers.

Communication objectives, tasks and KPI's

Defining communication strategy objectives, alignment with dissemination targets is essential. LIFE-ALFIO dissemination objectives/targets are as the following:

- (1) To build awareness and raise interest for ALINA organoclay products among EU paint manufacturers;
- (2) ALINA organoclay and manufacturing technology recognition among mining industry partners;
- (3) Involve industry media to promote access towards sustainable materials and product solutions;
- (4) Position and promote ALINA organoclays for substitution of chemicals of concern in the EU.
- (5) Motivate academic and research institution to use ALINA organoclays for scientific and practical research.

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LIFE-ALFIO project has set goal to reach audience of 500 companies and 130 000 people/ individuals. Considering project's specifics, it is important to separate two distinctive audiences/ target groups, where one group is industry professionals (Representatives from different stakeholders, including paint and coating manufacturers and raw material suppliers), and other group is general public/ individuals (typically paint and coating product end users or environmental enthusiasts, concerning about environmental pollution etc.).

To deliver dissemination targets and reach goals related to the LIFE-ALFIO reached audience, communication strategy objectives and tasks are separated/ identified for (D2) industry professionals and (D1) general public.

To align communication objectives with dissemination targets, following objectives have been defined:

Primary communication objectives

- 1 D2. Industry professionals: Collaborate and engage paint and coating manufacturers into LIFE-ALFIO project, where they evaluate paint formulation application for individual business needs.
- 2 D1. General public: Inform and develop awareness among paint and coating product end-users/ individuals about LIFE-ALFIO project and towards sustainable, environment and human health friendly paint product choices and usage for the household needs.

Secondary communication objectives

- 3 Maintain confidence and interest about LIFE-ALFIO project development and achieved results by paint and coating industry media channels.
- 4 Monitor and respond, by developing LIFE-ALFIO awareness among Academic institutions, Cluster and industry associations and policy makers about organoclays for substitution of chemicals.
- 5 Monitor and respond, by developing ALINA technology awareness among mining industry partners.

Describing primary communication objectives and identifying specific tasks:

1. **D2. Industry professionals:** Engage paint and coating manufacturers into LIFE-ALFIO project, where they evaluate paint formulation application for individual business needs.

Table no. 3, communication pipeline.



Communication tasks are organized in principle to build a pipeline (Table no.3), where (D2) Industry professionals are converted into online platform users. To achieve the goal, following tasks are defined:

D2.1) PROSPECTING. Develop industry professionals' awareness among the problems and industry needs addressed by LIFE-ALFIO project.

D2.2) CONSIDERATION. Facilitate industry

professionals' interest and willingness to visit LIFE-ALFIO web page and online platform, providing information about project's scope and expected outcomes, informing about potential benefits for the industry and paint manufacturers, creating initial interest to get involved.

D2.3) CONVERSION. Convert online visitors into registered users, interested to be informed and engaged into LIFE-ALFIO activities. Primary task is to collect visitor contact details for future engagement when online platform is launched and opened for the industry.

D2.4) CONVERSION & NURTURING. Launching LIFE-ALFIO online platform, registered visitors should be converted into platform users, to access related information about paint and coating formulations. From a project perspective, it is important to maximize number of online platform users.

2. **D1. General public:** Inform and develop awareness among paint and coating product end-users/ individuals about LIFE-ALFIO project and towards sustainable, environment and human health friendly paint product choices and usage for the household needs.

For (D1) general public needs, communication tasks are defined as awareness building about overall objective of LIFE-ALFIO project where is a need to reduce the impact of toxic chemicals on the environment and human health by reducing toxic biocides and VOCs in paint and coating formulations. To build general public initial interest, it is important to consider limitations towards specific knowledge among paint and coating product manufacturing and usage. General public should be addressed via educational message about paint and coating product usage, explaining paint labeling and application restrictions. Our primary task for communication campaign is awareness building towards sustainable, environment and human health friendly paint product choices and usage for the household needs. This should facilitate more advisedly and responsible paint and product purchases, increasing demand for sustainable product purchases, that leave positive effect on a industry.

Describing primary communication objectives, tasks, identifying measurable communication KPIs:

Overall communication KPI are combined for both target groups (D1) general public and (D2) industry professionals, identifying specific KPI targets for a period of LIFE-ALFIO project and 5 years after. Set KPI targets are aligned with the Goal of the LIFE-ALFIO project to reach audience of 500 companies and 130 000 people/ individuals.

Communication tasks	Communication KPIs	During LIFE_ALFIO project	5 years after LIFE_ALFIO project
Prospecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People reached 	130 K	650 K
Consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total page visits 	3,9 K	19,5 K
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique page visits 	2,3 K	11,7 K
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average visit duration 	1,5-1,8 min	1,5-1,8 min
Conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered individuals 	500	1750
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of downloads 	47	450
Nurturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returning users 	n/a	n/a
Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying users 	n/a	n/a

Target audience and channel description

Every and each specific case of target audience, identified as important for LIFE-ALFIO project, should be defined and evaluated from a perspective, which media channels provides best possible fit, to reach selected communication objectives.

(D2) Industry professionals as a target audience

Acknowledging target group size of industry professionals, that constitute different stakeholders, it is important to define principles that simplifies segmentation of specific industry professionals, to improve compliance with LIFE-ALFIO project scope and objectives. It is recommended, to emphasize environment, sustainability and human health focused enterprises and organizations, that constitute those as the organizational values and are part of enterprise long-term strategy. This will facilitate and improve LIFE-ALFIO project communication and provide better engagement from the industry professionals.

Target group definition should be aligned with Industry stakeholders, primary focusing on paint and coating manufacturers, that are initial users of LIFE-ALFIO online platform.

- **Paint and coating manufacturers** (online platform ready-made formulation users). Being future users of the new LIFE-ALFIO formulations they have most impact on the project, as they are the ones who will decide to start new paint and coating production. This should be considered as the core target group for project dissemination and R&T actions (B5, D). Actions must target manufacturers indirectly (industry magazines, videos, word-of mouth, brochures, online articles and advertising) and directly (i.e. targeted internet marketing, negotiations, communication and consulting during R&T actions and industry shows, 1:1 meetings and networking).
- **Binder manufacturers** (potential formulation suppliers for the online platform after the project). For the LIFE-ALFIO project continuity, it is essential to engage binder manufacturers, that are the key raw material suppliers for the paint and coating industry. It is expected that binder manufacturers are important market players, responsible towards environment and human health friendly raw material engineering to accelerate paint and coating market sustainability. Initial market research constitutes, that binder manufacturers are the formulators, providing industry with frame formulations for end product development. LIFE-ALFIO online platform has capacity to become a channel for binder manufacturers to market and channel ready-made paint formulations for the industry needs. Actions must target binder manufacturers directly (i.e. targeted internet marketing, negotiations, communication and consulting during R&T actions and industry shows, 1:1 meetings and networking).

(D1) General public as a target audience

- **End users of paint and coating products** are the main group of general public. It consists of EU citizens, using paint products for the household reconstruction purposes. Acknowledging the size and distribution of this target audience, there is a high importance for proper segmentation, to improve overall efficacy of reaching target group. Considering target audience's paint and coating product purchase cycles, problem situations or challenges with coated surfaces in the households, situation when target group experience acute health problem situations or indoor climate problems, it is recommended to explore those situations as opportunities for communication and to do proper target audience segmentation by the needs of target group. Following principles of target group sub-segmenting are recommended:

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- End users searching for the paint and coating products for personal needs, this include product search for specific applications (interior, exterior, kitchen, bathroom, etc.)
- End users searching for solutions to solve related problems with allergies and asthma;
- End users searching problem solutions for indoor air pollution and potential pollutants.

Considering general public target audience, another segment is defined as different audiences, indirectly related to the LIFE-ALFIO project. Those include scientists in Universities, business partners and other.

Other interrelated target audiences

- **Paint and coating industry media channels** – industry is considered traditional, with a number of strong media channels that provides industry professional coverage with news and industry related product updates. Considering limited number of professional, industry specific channels, it should be prioritized to develop relationships and find a way how to use media space for LIFE-ALFIO project promotion. Communication with industry media channels should be personalized, developing relationships with people involved into content management for each media individually.
- **Academic institutions** – to work on development of new materials and further organoclay applications in different materials. Dissemination strategy should focus on initiating fundamental and industrial researches and experiments with organoclay, inviting to cooperate in R&T actions, consulting during project implementation activities. LIFE-ALFIO project activities are case example towards organoclay use within sustainable paint and coating product development, where research institutions would have ability to follow project activities and gain better understanding about ALINA technology capabilities and opportunities it provides for other applications. Actions must target research institution directly (i.e. targeted internet marketing, negotiations, communication and consulting during R&T actions and industry shows, 1:1 meetings and networking).
- **Cluster and industry associations** – institutions with already established communication and networking channels. Dissemination activities related towards online platform communication and cooperation towards broader paint and coating as well as binder manufacturer engagement should be initiated by the project team. Actions must target cluster and industry associations directly (i.e. targeted internet marketing, negotiations, communication and consulting during R&T actions and industry shows, 1:1 meetings and networking).
- **Policy makers** – DG Environment, DG Growth, European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). Project team will consult with policy institutions and invite them to participate in project activities (A1, A2, B5, D1, D2, E1.) Project management team will introduce the Initiative (suggestion) document to policy makers, in order to promote LIFE-ALFIO project as a good practice for sustainable substitution and discuss green procurement specification models for sustainable paint and coating choice in construction procurements. Actions will target policy makers directly by presenting Initiative (suggestion) document and organizing the Conference/Panel discussion about biocide and VOC free challenges and solutions as well as direct targeting i.e. targeted internet marketing, negotiations, communication and consulting during R&T actions and industry shows, 1:1 meetings and networking).
- **Architects** – paint and coating material choices are influenced by the architects, where this group becomes an important decision maker towards more sustainable product application. From a project perspective, they should be considered as important stakeholder influencing overall demand for environment and human health friendly product consumptions. Actions must target architects and construction companies indirectly (industry magazines, videos, word-of mouth, brochures and other digital communication means)

Communication strategy framework

Complexity of communication strategy is embodied into Interconnection of different elements where target audiences and subordinated groups should be aligned with communication objectives and communication

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channels. Specific communication matrix is developed for each target audience, to describe logics and principles of using specific channels to reach specific communication objectives (Table no.4).

Table no.4, Strategy framework for (D2) Industry professionals.

	Primary target audience	Interrelated target audiences		
Communication tasks/ objectives/ Target audiences	Binder, Paint and coating manufacturers	Paint and coating industry media channel	Cluster and industry associations & Policy makers	Academic institutions
Communication Objective:	Collaborate and engage paint and coating manufacturers into LIFE-ALFIO project, where they evaluate paint formulation application for individual business needs.	Maintain confidence and interest about LIFE-ALFIO project development and achieved results by paint and coating industry media channels	Monitor and respond, by developing awareness among Cluster and industry associations and policy makers about ALINA organoclays for substitution of chemicals.	
PROSPECTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted emails. Web content SEO. Stand in industry shows, exhibitions. Advertising articles in industry magazines. Targeted online advertising, including Online Videos. LinkedIn targeted advertising. Advertising in Paint and coating industry online portals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand in industry shows, exhibitions. Direct emails. Phone calls. 1 to 1 meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand in industry shows, exhibitions. Appearance at policy making events. Targeted emails. LinkedIn targeted advertising. Targeted online advertising, including Online Videos. Phone calls. Initiation to panel discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appearance at academic conferences. Publications. Stand in industry shows, exhibitions. Targeted emails. Phone calls. 1 to 1 meeting.
CONSIDERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinars about LIFE-ALFIO project. Project & ALINA web page and dedicated content. ALINA Blogposts. Project social media and dedicated content. Brochures/ informative materials in industry shows. Event Networking. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project social media profiles and dedicated content. Project & ALINA web page and dedicated content. Event Networking. 1 to 1 meeting. Initiative document to policy makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publications. Project & ALINA web page and dedicated content. Project social media profiles and dedicated content. Event Networking. 1 to 1 meeting. White papers.
CONVERSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project & target audience specific landing pages. Project & ALINA web page. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conference/panel discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALINA technology webinars.
NURTURING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct emails. Phone calls. Webinars about platform. 1 to 1 meeting. 	Not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct emails. Phone calls. 1 to 1 meeting and co-creation projects. 	

Table no.3 - Strategy framework for (D1) general public.

Communication objectives/ Target audiences		End users of paint and coating products
Communication Objective:	Inform and develop awareness among paint and coating product end-users/ individuals about LIFE_ALFIO project and towards sustainable, environment and human health friendly paint product choices and usage for the household needs.	
PROSPECTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted online advertising (behavioral). Web content SEO. Project social media profiles and dedicated content. 	
CONSIDERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landing pages. Blogposts. 	
CONVERSION	Not applicable	
NURTURING	Not applicable	

High level communication plan

Table no.4 – High level communication plan.

		Message	Stakeholder/ target audience	Communication task	Formats
1	D2	Introducing LIFE-ALFIO project for the industry sustainable development. (Answers WHY?)	Paint and coating, binder manufacturers; Cluster and industry associations & Policy makers; Academic institutions.	PROSPECTING	Articles & Publications; web banners, promo video, blog posts, informative printed materials, scientific publications, posts in social media accounts.
2	D1	How to assess paint and coating product toxicity to make responsible product choices. (Answers WHY?)	Primary: End users of paint and coating products; Secondly: Cluster and industry associations & Policy makers	PROSPECTING	Landing page, online video, infographics.
3	D2	Introduction of paint formulations & online platform! Sustainable and traceable formulations for paint and coating industry transformation. (Answers WHAT?)	Paint and coating, binder manufacturers; Cluster and industry associations.	PROSPECTING & CONSIDERATION	Articles & Publications; web banners, blog posts, informative printed materials, posts in social media accounts, webinars (online video content).
4	D2	Introduction of biocide and VOC free challenges and solutions. (Answers HOW?)	Secondly: Cluster and industry associations & Policy makers	PROSPECTING & CONSIDERATION & CONVERSION	Initiative (suggestion) document to policy makers, conference/panel discussion about biocide and VOC free challenges and solutions
5	D2	How to use LIFE-ALFIO platform to benefit your business. (Answers HOW?)	Paint and coating manufacturers	CONSIDERATION & CONVERSION	Web banners, blog posts, landing pages, webinars (online video content).
				PROSPECTING	

6	D2	LIFE-ALFIO project update & news	Paint and coating, binder manufacturers; Cluster and industry associations & Policy makers; Academic institutions.		Blog posts, posts in social media accounts, personalized direct emails.
6	D2	LIFE-ALFIO project presentation in thematic events.	Paint and coating, binder manufacturers; Cluster and industry associations & Policy makers; Academic institutions.	PROSPECTING & CONSIDERATION & CONVERSION	Appearance at academic conferences., stand in industry shows, exhibitions, informative printed materials, networking.

Communication timeline

Communication strategy (Table no.5) is an integral part R&T activity. Communication activities are synchronised with LIFE-ALFIO On-line platform launch timeline.

Table no.5 – Communication plan timeline.

LIFE-ALFIO project plan		2019				2020				2021				2022			
Action number	Name of the action	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
A. Preparatory actions (if needed)																	
A.1	Potential costumers' and stakeholder in-depth qualitative survey																
A.2	Technical specification and validation guidelines																
A.3	Environment permissions																
B. Implementation actions (obligatory)																	
B.1	Development of 36 new paint formulations																
B.2	Paint and coating exhibit batch production																
B.3	Organosol production technology prototype																
B.4	Business plan																
B.5	Reproducibility and transferability (R&T) activities																
C. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions (obligatory)																	
C.1	Assessment of socio-economic impact																
C.2	Project performance monitoring																
D. Public awareness and dissemination of results (obligatory)																	
D.1	Information and awareness raising activities for general public																
D.2	Technical dissemination activities for paint and coating industry professionals																
E. Project management (obligatory)																	
E.1	Overall project management																
E.2	After-LIFE plan																

Paint formulation online-platform plan		2019				2020				2021				2022			
Action number	Name of the action	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
B5.2	Development & launch of the platform in test version																
B5.1	Development & launch of the platform: 16 paint formulations published on online platform																
B5.3	Promotional content development, distribution and continuous update																

Communication strategy (D1.4./) On-line platform marketing plan		2019				2020				2021				2022			
Action number	Name of the action	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
D1. Information and awareness raising activities for general public.																	
D1.1	Planning and promotional content development																
D1.2	Development of the landing page and social channels																
D1.3	Campaign: How to assess paint and coating product toxicity to make responsible product choices.																
D2. Technical dissemination activities for paint and coating industry professionals.																	
D2.1	Planning and promotional content development																
D2.2	CRM system integration with the online platform																
D2.3	Campaign: LIFE-ALFIO project update & news																
D2.4	Campaign: Introducing LIFE-ALFIO project for the industry sustainable development																
D2.5	Campaign: Introduction of paint formulations & online platform																
D2.6	Campaign: How to use LIFE-ALFIO platform to benefit your business																
D2.7	Campaign: LIFE-ALFIO project presentation in thematic events																
D2.8	B5.4 Development of initiative (suggestion) document to policy makers																
D2.9	D2.5 Conferences/paired discussion about biocide and VOC free challenges and solutions																

Communication strategy activities are organised among actions, D1. Information and awareness raising activities for general public and D2. Technical dissemination activities for paint and coating industry professionals. Communication activities illustrate specific time periods of promotional campaigns, that are aligned with communication objectives and Online Platform launch activities.

Communication risks

A risk management plan should be part of communication strategy so we can minimize the impact of potential problems and are not caught completely by surprise. Risks are present in all communication activities, especially in major undertakings. By definition: risk is anything that can prevent or reduce the likelihood of achieving set project goals and communication objectives.

Risks can be categorized into 5 broad types:

- Compliance, eg conforming to government regulations or legal requirements.

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- Financial, eg making the company and the project vulnerable, by poorly thought-through financial decisions that could jeopardize its viability.
- Operational, eg taking insufficient care of potential problems in operational processes.
- Strategic, eg not planning sufficiently for changes in the business environment.
- Reputational, eg not taking account of organizational activities that expose it to the wrath of customers and other stakeholders.

In a scope of Communication Strategy, we focus strongly on reputation risks, which are negative events that will diminish the opinions that stakeholders have about ALINA company and LIFE-ALFIO project, and therefore stakeholders' willingness to give their support. Reputational risks relate to the likelihood of negative perceptions adversely impacting an entity's income, brand, support, and public image. Reputation penalties can be very harmful for the project at so early stage of development.

Table no.6 – Reputation related risks.

	Risks	Description	Mitigation
1	Potential ALINA trademark litigation process.	In 2020, ALINA has a legal dispute over trademark rights. Facts are now being gathered to decide what to do next.	Acknowledging potential risks ALINA company management should solve the legal dispute by end of year 2020, before LIFE-ALFIO project communication is started.
2	Delays with publication of LIFE-ALFIO paint formulations.	Respecting the complexity of the process, there is a possibility that there will be a delay in the development of paint and coating formulations, which may affect communication strategy.	Communication timeline should be aligned with potential delays, where planning project activities, two different scenarios are developed.
3	Bad publicity about raw materials used in LIFE-ALFIO paint formulations.	Given the large number of raw materials, the different suppliers and the limited information we can obtain on raw materials, there is a risk that their compliance with ecolabel standards may be called into question.	Considering potential raw material quality compliance issues, it is recommended to define clear criteria, that are considered on the first step, when raw materials are selected. It is recommended, to apply quality criteria from blue angel, that substantially exceeds ecolabel requirements.
4	Ecolabel standards are updated, where LIFE-ALFIO paint formulations are not compliant anymore	Knowing about rapid developments about chemical substance restrictions in the industry, there is a probability that Ecolabel standards will be changed in a period of two years.	LIFE-ALFIO team will be in contact with Ecolabel standard, to discuss possible changes. Final paint formulations will be evaluated towards chemical substances that can be limited in the future.

During the implementation of the project, it is necessary to perform regular risk analysis, which will help to identify them in a timely manner and, if necessary, implement risk mitigation activities. The recommended regularity of risk identification is at least quarterly.