



Land-Based Solutions for Plastics in the Sea

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D1.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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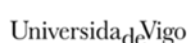


Horizon 2020
European Union Funding
for Research & Innovation

PROJECT INFORMATION

- Project number:** 101003954
- Project acronym:** LABPLAS
- Project full title:** Land-Based Solutions for Plastics in the Sea
- Call:** H2020-SC5-2018-2019-2020 submitted for H2020-SC5-2020-2 / 03 Sep 2020
- Topic:** CE-SC5-30-2020 – Plastics in the environment: understanding the sources, transport, distribution and impacts of plastics pollution
- Type of action:** RIA – Research and Innovation Action
- Starting date:** June 1st, 2021
- Duration:** 48 months
- List of participants:**

Nº	Participant name	Acronym	Country	Type
1	UNIVERSIDADE DE VIGO	UVI	SPAIN	HES
2	UNIVERSIDADE DA CORUÑA	UDC	SPAIN	HES
3	Bundesanstalt fuer Gewaesserkunde	BfG	GERMANY	RTO
4	LABORATORIO IBERICO INTERNACIONAL DE NANOTECNOLOGIA	INL	PORTUGAL	RTO
5	KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT LEUVEN	KUL	BELGIUM	HES
6	HELMHOLTZ ZENTRUM FUR OZEANFORSCHUNG KIEL	GEOMAR	GERMANY	RTO
7	NATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHY CENTRE	NOC	UNITED KINGDOM	RTO
8	SORBONNE UNIVERSITE	SU	FRANCE	HES
9	OPEN UNIVERSITEIT NEDERLAND	OONL	NETHERLANDS	HES
10	LEIBNIZ INSTITUTE FOR BALTIC SEA RESEARCH	IOW	GERMANY	RTO
11	ASSOCIACAO PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO DO ATLANTIC INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE	AC	PORTUGAL	RTO
12	UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SAO PAULO	UNIFESP	BRAZIL	HES
13	BASF SE	BASF	GERMANY	LE
14	TG ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH	ER	UNITED KINGDOM	SME
15	CONTACTICA S.L.	CTA	SPAIN	SME
16	EGI	EGI	NETHERLANDS	Non-P
17	RADBOUD UNIVERSITEIT	RU	NETHERLANDS	HES












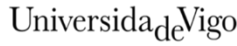








DELIVERABLE DETAILS

Document number:	D1.1
Document title:	Project Management Guidelines
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Task:	Task 1.1: Management Procedures
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Author:	N Valdés 
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Executive summary:	This document corresponds to Deliverable 1.1 <i>Project Management Guidelines</i> . It covers the description of the project management structures and the procedures that the LABPLAS project will follow to ensure appropriate project coordination (i.e., communication between partners and with the European Commission, monitoring the evolution of the actions and proceedings, monitoring of resources, quality assurance and knowledge management).

Version	Date	Change
1.0	23/06/2021	Initial version
2.0	27/10/2021	Revised and corrected final version

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this document reflect only the authors' views, and not necessarily those of the European Commission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROJECT INFORMATION	1
DELIVERABLE DETAILS	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
LIST OF FIGURES.....	4
LIST OF TABLES	4
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	5
1 Introduction	6
2 Grant Agreement.....	6
3 Consortium Agreement	7
4 Project management structure and decision-making bodies	7
4.1 Project Coordinator (PC)	8
4.2 General Assembly (GA)	8
4.3 Steering Committee (SC):	9
4.4 Innovation & Exploitation Board (IEB)	9
4.5 Work Package Leaders (WPL).....	9
4.6 Task Leaders (TL)	10
4.7 External Advisory Board (EAB).....	10
5 Project management	11
5.1 Conflict resolution	11
5.2 Project documents	11
5.2.1 Storage.....	11
5.2.2 Document templates	11
5.2.3 Document coding	12
5.3 Communication & dissemination management	12
5.3.1 Internal communication.....	12
5.3.2 Communication & dissemination activities	12
5.4 Project monitoring and control.....	13
5.4.1 Meetings.....	13
5.4.2 Meetings' schedule	13
5.5 Continuous reporting.....	14
5.6 Periodic reporting.....	14

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. LABPLAS management structures 7

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. LABPLAS External Advisory Board..... 8

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation / Acronym	Description
CTA	Contactica
EAB	External Advisory Board
EC	European Commission
DoA	Description of the Action
GA	General Assembly
IEB	Innovation and Exploitation Board
IP	Intellectual Property
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
PC	Project Coordinator
REA	Research Executive Agency
RP	Reporting Period
SC	Steering Committee
SMNP	Small, Micro and Nano Plastics
TL	Task Leader
UVI	University of Vigo
WP	Work Package
WPL	Work Package Leader

1 Introduction

Plastic is pouring from land into our oceans at a rate of nearly 10 million tonnes a year. Once in the sea, plastics fragment into particles moving with the currents and ocean gyres before washing up on the coastline. The smaller the size the higher the risk posed by these particles to organisms and human health. Because small, micro- and nano- plastics (SMNP) cannot be removed from oceans, proactive action regarding research on plastic alternatives and strategies to prevent plastic from entering the environment should be taken promptly. The **LABPLAS** project is a 48-months project whose vision is to develop new techniques and models for the detection and quantification of SMNP. Specifically, **LABPLAS** will determine reliable identification methods for a more accurate assessment of the abundance, distribution, and toxicity determination of SMNP and associated chemicals in the environment. It will also develop practical computational tools that should facilitate the mapping of plastic-impacted hotspots and promote scientifically sound plastic governance.

This document corresponds to Deliverable 1.1 *Project Management Guidelines*. It covers the description of the project management structures and the procedures that the LABPLAS project will follow to ensure appropriate project coordination (i.e., communication between partners and with the European Commission, monitoring the evolution of the actions and proceedings, monitoring of resources, quality assurance and knowledge management).

2 Grant Agreement

Grant Agreement No. 101003954 is the contractual document signed by all the project partners which defines the rights and obligations of the Consortium with the Research Executive Agency (REA) under the powers delegated by the European Commission. The Grant Agreement includes the following annexes:

Annex 1 Description of the action

Annex 2 Estimated budget for the action

2a Additional information on the estimated budget

Annex 3 Accession Forms

Annex 4 Model for the financial statements

Annex 5 Model for the certificate on the financial statements

Annex 6 Model for the certificate on the methodology

A full description of the work plan, including Work Package (WP) tasks, deliverables and associated milestones is contained in the Grant Agreement Annex 1. This will be used as the main reference point for the project.

The Grant Agreement and its annexes will be available for all partners on the project website (<https://labplas.eu/>) through the partner's repository restricted access tab and in the shared OneDrive.

3 Consortium Agreement

The Consortium Agreement is the internal contract of the consortium partners, signed and accepted by all partners. It defines the Consortium internal rules for project management as well as the Consortium organisation and decision-making mechanisms. In case of discrepancy, the Consortium Agreement is overruled by the Grant Agreement.

The project Consortium Agreement will also be available for all partners on the project website (<https://labplas.eu/>) through the partner’s repository restricted access tab and in the shared OneDrive.

4 Project management structure and decision-making bodies

LABPLAS decision-making bodies are illustrated in Figure 1. The composition, roles and responsibilities of all decision-making bodies are described below. Specific operational procedures for the decision-making bodies are described in the Consortium Agreement.

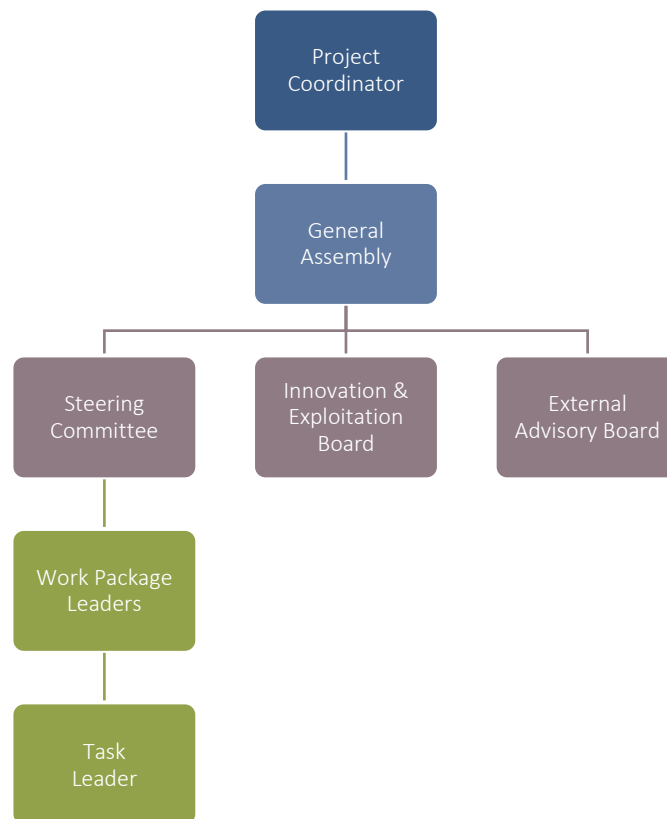


Figure 1. LABPLAS management structures

4.1 Project Coordinator (PC)

The Project Coordinator (PC) is the legal entity acting as the intermediary between **LABPLAS** partners (the Parties) and the European Commission (EC). The PC will, in addition to its responsibilities as a Party, perform the tasks assigned to it, as described in the Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement. The coordinator of **LABPLAS** is the University of Vigo (UVI) and the person responsible for this activity is Ricardo Beiras. He is the single point of contact between the consortium and the EC. In particular, the PC will be responsible for:

- Monitoring compliance by the Parties with their obligations under the Grant Agreement
- Monitoring project progress by collecting all periodic activities and evaluating key achievements, planned activities, progress towards deliverables and main concerns
- Gathering the necessary and updated information from the partners to report the Project progress in a proper manner, ensuring that the quality standards have been reached.
- Submitting deliverables, reports (including financial statements and related certifications), and specifically requested documents to the Funding Authority.
- Organising and chairing periodic project meetings, preparing meetings' agenda and chairing project meetings.
- Transmitting documents and information connected with the Project to any other Parties concerned.
- Administering the financial contribution of the Funding Authority and fulfilling the financial tasks.
- Initiating collaboration with relevant partners and other Project Coordinators of existing relevant H2020 research projects to establish complementary information flows and joint activities.
- Keeping updated and available the contact list of project Members and other contact persons.

4.2 General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly (GA) will be the ultimate decision-making body and executive body of the consortium. It will consist of **one representative of each partner** and will oversee the project monitoring, periodic reporting (including reviews), risks, troubleshooting, and applying fall-back measures when necessary. It is also responsible for the quality assurance of project results and financial monitoring of the project.

The GA will meet a minimum of once a year, and it will be possible to call an extraordinary meeting in case of arising conflicts or any other issues that could hinder the normal execution of the project.

The decision-making mechanism within the GA will be by a majority (2/3) of the votes. In case of a tie, the coordinator (UVI) will hold the decisive vote.

If a partner is absent during voting, the partner can give in advance to the coordinator a written authorisation (via email) with their vote to a specific decision. In case of not sending this written authorisation, they will lose the right to vote for that specific decision.

If a partner gives up the project once the project is running, the partner will lose the right to vote. If this partner is replaced, the vote will be given to the new partner. In case that the partner is not replaced, the decision-making mechanism will continue to be the same.

A Member which can prove that its work, time for performance, costs, liabilities, intellectual property rights or other legitimate interests would be severely affected by a decision of the Consortium Body may exercise a veto for the corresponding decision or relevant part of the decision.

4.3 Steering Committee (SC):

The Steering Committee (SC) is the supervisory body for the execution of the Project, which reports to and is accountable to the General Assembly (GA). The SC is composed of the Project Coordinator and the Work Packages Leaders. The SC will meet at least 4 times a year and will be responsible for the technical overall management of the project and the coordination between the different WPs. This includes:

- Discussion and assessment of the progress of the WPs and overall project achievements as per the Description of the Action (DoA).
- Risk due diligence, troubleshooting, validation and adoption of contingency plans if necessary.
- Quality assurance of project results and financial monitoring of the project including partners.
- Agreement on modifications, including budget redistributions and task schedule variations if required.
- Monitor results to be protected and advise partners on the means of protection.
- First level conflict resolution.

The decision-making mechanism within the SC will be by a majority (2/3) of the votes. In case of a tie, the coordinator (UVI) will hold the decisive vote.

4.4 Innovation & Exploitation Board (IEB)

The Innovation and Exploitation Board (IEB) will provide:

- technical, legal, and economic expertise in technology transfer
- supporting guidance on intellectual property (IP) management, intellectual property rights (IPR) and innovation management
- commercial assessment to enable the transfer of the project's results outside the consortium for exploitation purposes

Since the partner Contactica (CTA) has a long experience in conducting effective exploitation, the IEB will be chaired by CTA and will consist of one representative for every partner with exploitable results (with commercial interests or not).

4.5 Work Package Leaders (WPL)

Work Package Leaders (WPL) coordinate the day-to-day technical planning and work within the Work Packages (WP). The responsibilities of the WPL are to:

- Organise the work and outputs of the WP and resolve any conflict arising according to the project protocols.
- Monitor the effective and efficient implementation of the Action.
- Coordinate, plan, monitor and report about the WP progress (including budget issues).
- Follow up decisions made by other consortium bodies insofar as they affect the WP.
- Review, together with the PC, deliverables, milestones, risks, and contingency plans related to the WP.
- Communicate any plans, deliverables, documents, and information connected with the WP between its participants and, if relevant, to the SC.
- Report regularly (at least every three months) about the status of the WP. This progress will be discussed in the SC meetings.

4.6 Task Leaders (TL)

The technical work in each Work Package (WP) is broken down into Tasks. Each Task performs several activities. All project deliverables are associated with a specific work package task. The responsibilities of the Task Leader (TL), who reports to the Work Package Leader (WPL) on a regular basis, are to:

- Agree on the task activity work plan
- Coordinate and monitor the task
- Co-ordinate the drafting of the deliverable and ensure the inputs of other partners where necessary
- Notify the WPL when outputs are ready for review
- Maintain communications and ensure alignment between all other interacting tasks
- Provide to other contributing Parties detailed technical knowledge and advice about the work area being covered by the task.

4.7 External Advisory Board (EAB)

The External Advisory Board (EAB) includes relevant stakeholders, external and independent from **LABPLAS** partners. The EAB will provide an additional process of quality control, advice, and validation of the vision, global impact, and outreach of the project by participating in Project Meetings (at least one per year), reviewing the scientific and technical results of the project and giving advice towards further advancements to be achieved. The EAB members will be allowed to participate in General Assembly meetings upon invitation but do not have any voting rights. Meetings with the EAB and activities to implement their advice will be documented and correspond to Deliverable 1.5 *Final compilation of EAB contributions*. The **LABPLAS** EAB is composed of the members presented in Table 1.

Person	Organisation	Type
Richard Cronin	OSPAR Vice-Chair. Senior Advisor with the Water and Marine Advisory Unit of the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in Ireland.	Policymaker
Michel Cassart	PlasticsEurope. Strategic Council Director	Industry
Marta Martínez-Gil Pardo de Vera	Deputy General Directorate for the Protection of the Sea of MITECO (Spanish Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge)	Policymaker
Maria Ferreira	Director of International Programme. Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)	NGOs

Table 1. LABPLAS External Advisory Board (EAB)

5 Project management

5.1 Conflict resolution

To solve the problems that could compromise the success of the project the following steps will be taken:

1. Where possible, the problem will be discussed at the WP level and an attempt will be made to arrive at a solution.
2. Where the issue could not be resolved at the WP level, the problem will be discussed at the SC level.
3. In the unlikely event that the SC cannot resolve the issue, the problem will be discussed at the GA level
4. Ultimately, if none of the above is enough, the PC will discuss the problem with the European Commission (EC) and an attempt will be made to arrive at a solution.

5.2 Project documents

It is expected that throughout the **LABPLAS** project substantial amounts of data will be produced. It is, therefore, vital that document management processes are followed to enable users to locate and identify relevant files and to ensure version control.

Data management will depend on the nature of the information. A Data Management Plan (DMP) will be provided as Deliverable D.1.3 *Data Management Plan* in M6, which will explain in detail how research data will be managed and documented throughout the project.

5.2.1 Storage

The documents generated in **LABPLAS** will be stored in a data repository for long-term management and preservation following the FAIR principles implemented by the EC. Partner EGI, with extensive experience and expertise in hosting, management and curation of data and databases, will monitor the adherence to data standards, quality of data deposited, and will encourage the deposition of complete datasets, including negative results. These measures collectively will contribute to improving relevance and reliability of knowledge transfer, thus building trust internally (among consortium partners) and among **LABPLAS** external stakeholders, be they research entities, public bodies and/or businesses.

5.2.2 Document templates

Templates will be produced using a standard format including defined styles, page layout and content structure, to have a common language in the generation and reporting of information. These templates will be prepared by UVI and CTA and will be available at the documents' repository in the private area of the **LABPLAS** website (<https://labplas.eu/>) and the shared OneDrive.

Templates have been produced to customise for:

- ➔ Deliverables (MS Word format) List 2
- ➔ Meeting Agendas (MS Word format)
- ➔ Meeting Minutes (MS Word format)
- ➔ Presentations (MS Powerpoint format)

These templates may be updated as the project progresses. Consortium partners will be able to download the most up to date version from the repository in the private area of the **LABPLAS** website (<https://labplas.eu/>) and the shared OneDrive.

5.2.3 Document coding

Each document will use a structured file name. This method of document coding produces a unique reference for all **LABPLAS** documents stored on the website.

Documents must be coded using the following structure:

LABPLAS_WP[WP NUMBER]_[DOCUMENT TYPE AND REFERENCE]_[TITLE]_v[VERSION NUMBER]_[STATUS]

One example of this coding is:

LABPLAS_WP1_D1.1_Project Management Guidelines_v1_Draft

5.3 Communication & dissemination management

5.3.1 Internal communication

All important e-mails sent among partners will have the Project Manager in cc to keep the Project Coordinator informed about the situation and the progress (or problems) of the project. Besides, all e-mails among partners within a specific WP will have the corresponding WPL in cc.

MS Teams, OneDrive and the **LABPLAS** website will represent the internal project communication tools for task management, issue tracking and exchange of project internal information and documents. These platforms will support adequate communication and team collaboration among project partners.

5.3.2 Communication & dissemination activities

When a partner carries out a communication or a dissemination activity, that partner has to complete and send an activity report to Nuria Valdés (CTA). Documents corresponding to communications activities have to include the partner's name and the date. For example:

LABPLAS_WP [WP NUMBER]_Activity Reporta_[PARTNER]_[DATE]

LABPLAS_WP9_Activity Report_CTA_20200711

Activity reports may be submitted once a communication or dissemination activity has taken place or grouped with all communication and activities that took place in three months.

Further communication and dissemination guidelines will be outlined in D9.1 *Communication and Dissemination Plan* in M6.

5.4 Project monitoring and control

5.4.1 Meetings

The organisation and facilitation of the activities of the project will be achieved through periodical meetings planned well in advance. The goal of the meetings will be to evaluate project progress, outline work plans, define responsibilities and actions to be taken, agree on any potential amendments to the work plan, engage in scientific discussions, share ideas, clarify questions/doubts, run targeted training sessions for project partners, and receive updates regarding interactions with the European Commission.

Once a meeting is held between different partners, minutes with the main outcomes will be prepared and distributed to all participants and the Project Coordinator promptly. In addition, all meeting minutes will also be uploaded to the repository.

5.4.2 Meetings' schedule

5.4.2.1 Every four to eight weeks

The technical progress and results of each Work Package will be evaluated and measured based on achievements of project milestones and deliverables, as well as project workflow. For this purpose, a discussion on each relevant WP will be organised and chaired by the Work Package Leader every four to eight weeks (the frequency will be adapted to the needs). Within one week after the meeting, a short meeting summary/minutes will be prepared and sent to the Project Manager who will compile and discuss the reports with the Project Coordinator. All meeting minutes, presentations and reports will also be uploaded to the project repository.

5.4.2.2 Every three months

The Steering Committee will meet at least quarterly. In these meetings, the performance of the project will be evaluated against the achievement of deliverables and milestones. Project deviations, risks and issues will be addressed, and corrective action plans will be agreed on as necessary. The minutes of the meetings will be compiled by the project manager and distributed among all partners within two weeks after the meeting. All meeting minutes, presentations and reports will also be uploaded to the project repository.

5.4.2.3 Once a year

The General Assembly (GA) will meet at least once a year. GA meetings and, when possible, will be organized at the location of a different partner's institutions.

Each partner will present the interim results and data achieved in the form of an oral presentation and in the form of electronic files containing all details. The consortium will evaluate the performance of the project regarding appropriate scientific results and efficient use of resources.

The minutes of the meetings and all presentations and reports will be compiled by the project manager and distributed among all partners within one month after the meeting. All meeting minutes will also be uploaded to the project repository.

The External Advisory Board (EAB) and the Commission will be notified at least six weeks in advance and invited to GA meetings to provide an external viewpoint on the project activities and an oversight on quality and risk management issues.

5.5 Continuous reporting

The Project Manager will monitor the progress of the project through regular internal progress reports. Updates will be provided to the Project Coordinator every three months by each WPL at SC meetings and yearly by each partner at GA meetings.

5.6 Periodic reporting

The reporting process allows the EC to follow the project closely and to ensure that it is implemented as stated in the Grant Agreement and in conformity with the financial rules. Reporting to the European Commission will involve the production of consolidated periodic technical and financial reports. There are three reporting periods (RP). RP1 closes on M18, RP2 closes on M36 and RP3 closes on M48. A periodic report needs to be compiled and submitted to the EC at the end of each reporting period (within 60 days following the end of the reporting period). It includes:

- A periodic technical report (explanation of the work carried out; overview of the progress; publishable summary)
- A periodic financial report (individual financial statement; explanation of the use of resources; periodic summary of the financial statement)

For each periodic reporting period, the Project Coordinator will advise partners to send their technical and financial reports in the forms and templates provided by the Research Executive Agency (REA) to be reviewed (for completeness, accuracy, relevance, appearance and structure) before submitting them to the Participant Portal.

Lastly, a final report must be submitted within 60 days following the end of the last reporting period (in addition to the periodic report for the last reporting period). It must include:

- A final technical report (overview of the results and their exploitation and dissemination; the conclusions of the action)
- A final financial report (a final summary of the financial statement and in some cases a certificate of the financial statement issued by an external auditor)