

# FORCOAST



Earth Observation Services For Wild Fisheries, Oystergrounds  
Restoration And Bivalve Mariculture Along European Coasts

## PROJECT DELIVERABLE REPORT

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**Deliverable Title:** Communication and Marketing Plan  
for the FORCOAST project

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## 1. Introduction

FORCOAST, subtitled, Earth Observation services for Wild Fisheries, Oystergrounds Restoration and Bivalve Mariculture along European Coasts, is an EU-funded project. It involves public and private sectors to improve the business uptake of the Copernicus<sup>1</sup> Earth Observation services for fisheries and mariculture.

FORCOAST will develop, test, and demonstrate innovative services based on satellite information from the Copernicus Marine, Land, and Climate Services, local in-situ information, and advanced numerical modelling.

FORCOAST works to deliver high-quality information incorporating water and meteorological indicators, which will help to improve planning, management, and operations in coastal marine aquaculture activities along the European coasts.

The FORCOAST project consortium includes a wide variety of organizations, from marine research institutes to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which are both service developers and users of marine information. In this way, the project ensures that the services are designed to satisfy the market needs.

This document outlines the FORCOAST plan to approach the users of the project results, expand the user-base, and engage with a broader range of blue economy stakeholders at European, national, and regional levels. Specifics of the marketing plans will be developed by the SME-project partners as part of their business and exploitation plans. The present document will underpin these efforts, by supporting the stakeholder engagement and co-development of compelling messages related to the FORCOAST services or products.

In FORCOAST, communication is a key enabler of a successful engagement with users and stakeholders. All project partners routinely use communication tools to reach out to their audiences at various levels, from local to European. This plan is designed to help the consortium by providing a clear approach to developing engagement and communication outputs.

## 2. FORCOAST communication targets

FORCOAST is a market-uptake project and users and stakeholders are at the core of its activities. We identify two types of FORCOAST communication targets:

Users:

- 1.1 Existing users: already in the FORCOAST consortium (project partners). FORCOAST works with several SMEs to co-design Copernicus applications for their needs. These SMEs are both partners and users of the project's results. FORCOAST project develops its applications in eight national pilot sites in Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria, Belgium, Ireland, Denmark, Romania, and Italy.
- 1.2 Potential users: industries working with the consortium users. Successful FORCOAST user engagement and co-design is foreseen to generate interest from industries and SMEs working closely with the exiting project users (e.g. national aquaculture and mariculture companies).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.copernicus.eu/en>

Stakeholders:

1.3 Interested in the project results. FORCOAST does not operate in isolation from a broad range of European blue economy activities. It increases the Copernicus service uptake, helps promote the blue economy opportunities and public-private partnerships, and generates innovations which can be further transferred beyond the project's lifetime. Examples of the FORCOAST stakeholders include environmental protection agencies, coastal search and rescue, tourism, ports and shipping, technology platforms, research, the European Commission, and the Copernicus programme.

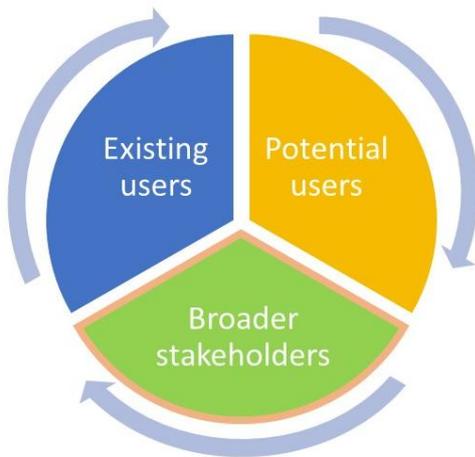


Figure 1: Schematic representation of the FORCOAST communication targets.

FORCOAST targets include the existing users (part of the project consortium), the potential users (from industries working with the consortium users), and broader stakeholders (interested in the project's results from a broader blue economy perspective).

These main target categories are also reflected in table 1 below.

### 3. Communication activities

FORCOAST has a set of basic communication tools, such as the project website<sup>2</sup>, information leaflet, and social media accounts<sup>3,4</sup>. These are key to support the project's visibility and provide a focal point for main information and deliverables. [FORCOAST Deliverable 7.1](#) details these tools. In the present communications and marketing plan we are addressing targeted communication tools for each type of audience.

The analysis of the FORCOAST audiences is transferred into this plan from [Deliverable 2.1](#) which offers a comprehensive overview of the project's users and stakeholders and lays the foundations for the communication activities listed below. Table 1 below highlights the main audience categories of the project in a stakeholder prioritization map.

<sup>2</sup> <https://forcoast.eu/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://twitter.com/forcoast\\_eu](https://twitter.com/forcoast_eu)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/company/forcoast/>

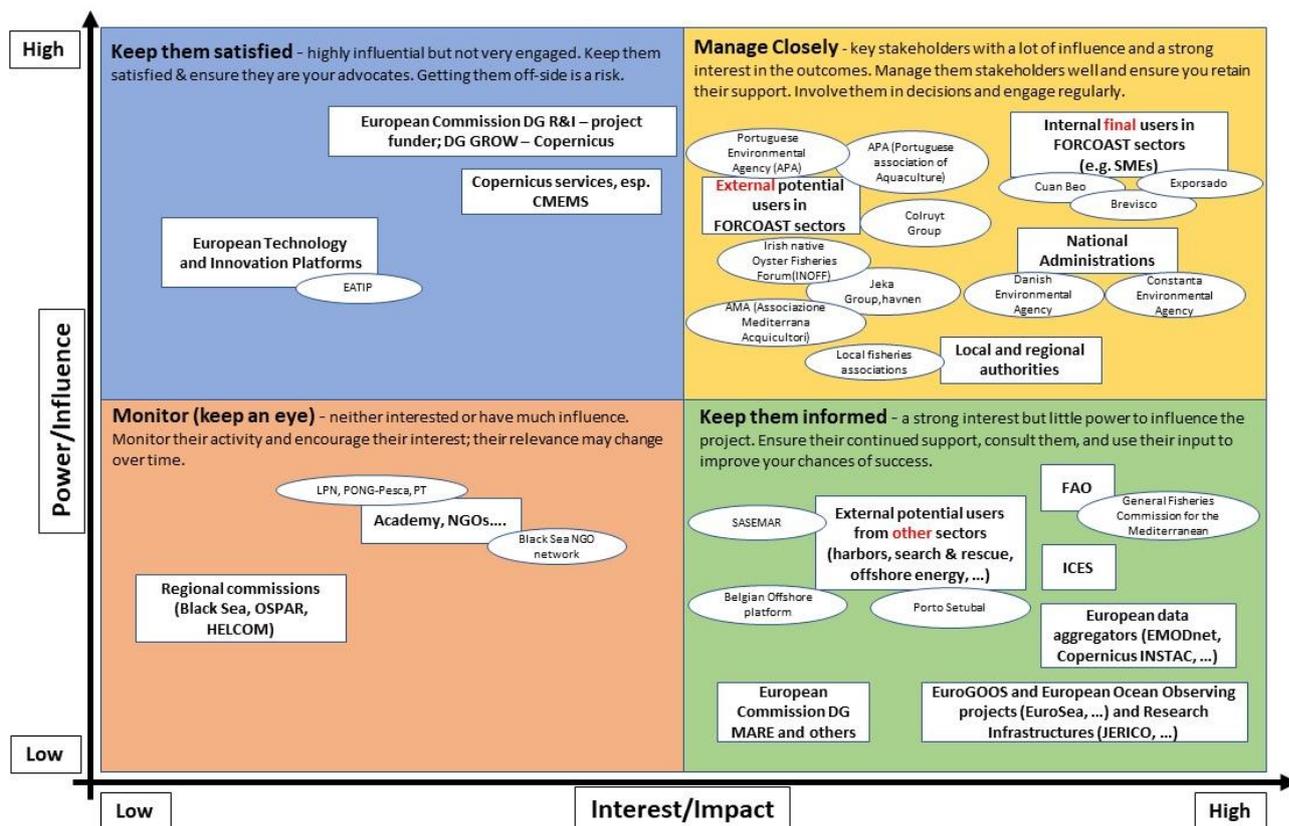


Table 1: Example of the FORCOAST audience prioritization. Level of Interest/Impact indicates how much a stakeholder cares about the outcomes; Level of Influence/Power indicates the degree to which a stakeholder can make or break the project. This map will be reviewed throughout the project duration.

FORCOAST communication activities address two main groups: users, existing and potential, of the project applications and services, and stakeholders, who include a broader and more generic group including decision-makers and administration, data initiatives, environmental monitoring, technology platforms, and others. Two sets of communication outputs are defined in this plan to target each of these two groups of audiences.

### Activities targeted at current and potential users

FORCOAST user engagement activities span various geographical scales with audiences at local, regional, and pan-European levels. The proposed activities were discussed with the FORCOAST pilots in eight national sites in Europe (Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria, Belgium, Ireland, Denmark, Romania, and Italy) to fit the specific requirements and correspond to the perceived user expectations. Leaders of the FORCOAST pilot sites responded to a WP7 survey to determine and prioritize a set of dissemination tools for the project’s users. The list below reflects these tools and their prioritization.

1. Co-design activities: workshops (physical or virtual);
2. Local media outreach (e.g. local newspapers) and press releases;
3. National-language communications (brochures and other promotional materials);
4. Maritime business events and fairs at local, regional, national levels, and European levels (e.g. Seafood fairs, BlueInvest);
5. Promotional videos (short videos and interviews with pilot partners in national languages and in English);
6. User quotes and testimonials (used together with other promotion tools);



7. Best practice sharing across regions (through FORCOAST joint pilot activities and general assemblies).



Figure 2: Illustrations of FORCOAST pilot sites (from left to right: Romania, Ireland, Italy)

### Activities targeted at broader stakeholders

FORCOAST is a market-oriented project operating in a broader blue economy and European integration landscape. It is important for the project’s success to link with a broader diversity of blue economy stakeholders than just the FORCOAST users. Such engagement may not always have a clear output in mind (as compared to the user engagement, which the project conducts for a specific result of co-design or market uptake), rather it aims at ensuring the visibility of the project’s results, promoting the European blue economy potential, and addressing future funding opportunities.

- Participation in European and regional stakeholder events (e.g. European Maritime Days workshops and exhibitions – image to the right features a EuroGOOS stand at EMD2019, Atlantic Stakeholder Platform conferences, Copernicus Marine week; regional Copernicus Marine Service trainings, etc);
- Participation in relevant science conferences (e.g. EGU, ICES science conference, etc);
- Visualizations and infographics highlighting the project’s results in a broader context;
- Policy-oriented slide deck including visual examples and user testimonials;
- Videos developed for the user category will also be used in the stakeholder context.



## 4. Impact assessment

The FORCOAST Coordination Committee Team, comprising all work package (co-)leaders and the coordination unit, will annually review the project’s impact. The first impact meeting will take place in the first year of the project to define a set of potential FORCOAST success stories. The impact meetings will also review the stakeholder prioritization map exemplified in Table 1.

Success stories will include the Copernicus products and applications developed through the project as well as fruitful



co-design approaches. Other indicators of success may include uptakes by key media and communication channels and cross-fertilisation activities with relevant EU or national activities.

The impact assessment will include strong involvement of Work Package 2 and will be linked with Milestone 4 on user feedback and Deliverable 2.2 on service design and implementation.

The business and exploitation plans developed for the FORCOAST products and services will include marketing plans targeted at the specific project outputs. These marketing plans will be incorporated into the impact assessment process.

FORCOAST has implemented a dissemination log to track the uptake of its activities. This uptake database will also contribute to the impact assessment. Deliverable 7.3 will analyse the success of different communication tools and help adapt the plans accordingly.

The FORCOAST stakeholder conference foreseen at the end of the project will be a key showcase of the project impacts.